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RECORDS OF MY LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

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RECORDS OF MY LIFE.

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BY THE LATE

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AUTHOR OF "MONSIEUR TONSON."

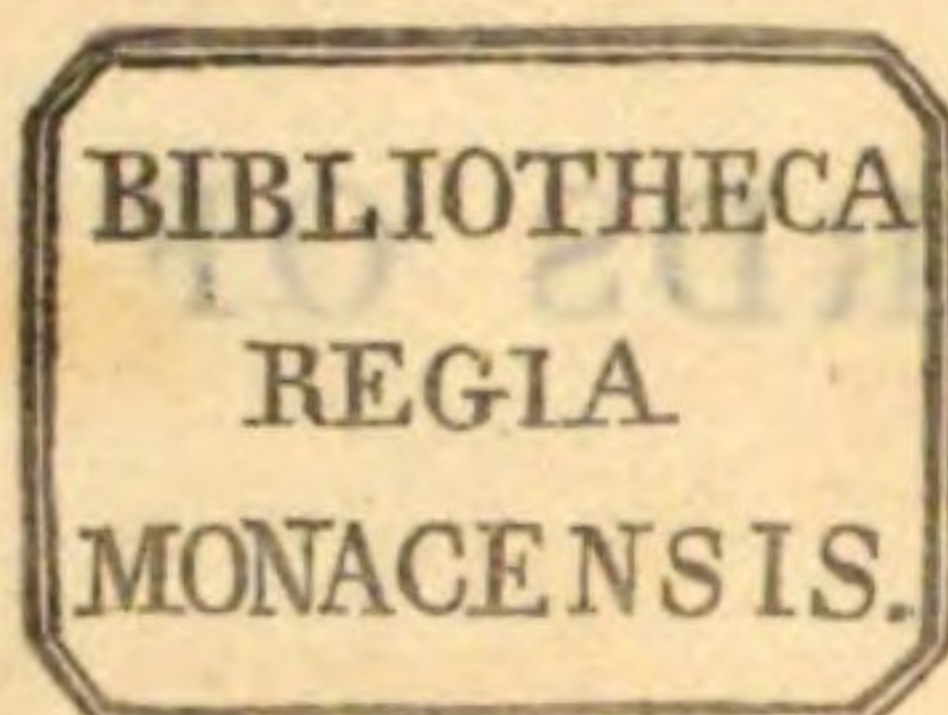
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LONDON:

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RECORDS OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

LEWIS, a provincial actor. This actor I knew in my early days. He was no relation to the admirable comic actor who was so long one of the main props of Covent Garden Theatre. The person whom I now mention was a provincial performer well known, but particularly at Liverpool, when the theatre was under the management of Mr. Younger, who had been engaged for a few seasons at Covent Garden Theatre. Lewis was an old man when I knew him. He had a turn for poetry, and published a few of his effusions with the following poetical motto :—

The Muses forced me to besiege 'em,
Necessitas non habet legem.

He was generally known by the title of "The King of Grief," as he had watery eyes, which made him always appear to be weeping, and as he was continually predicting misery to himself. As he was a harmless man, and possessed of literary talents, he was treated kindly by his professional brethren, and had some share in an annual benefit.

On one occasion, when the benefit had been very productive to him, he was congratulated on his suc-

cess. Instead of evincing his own satisfaction, he began crying, and said, "Ah! I shall not be so lucky next year." Mr. Younger, who was a very friendly man, invited old Lewis to dine with him at Liverpool. Lewis declined the invitation, alleging the indifferent state of his attire. Mr. Younger desired him to go into the wardrobe of the theatre, and gave orders that he should receive any suit of clothes that fitted him. As soon as he was properly accommodated, he rejoined Mr. Younger at dinner. After a few glasses of wine, which instead of raising his spirits depressed him, he began weeping. Mr. Younger, with great kindness, asked him the cause of his sudden grief, "Why," said he, "is it not lamentable to think that such a man of genius as myself should be obliged to such a stupid fellow as you are for a suit of clothes and a dinner?" Far from being offended, Mr. Younger only laughed at his ludicrous and untimely ingratitude.

DAGGER MARR. This actor was on the stage in the earlier days of Garrick. I saw him at my father's when I was very young. He had then retired from the stage, but being an intelligent man he lived in respectable society. Whether he was honoured with the epithet of "Dagger" on account of his being generally employed in representing murderers, or whether it was really his christian name, I never heard; and it is hardly likely that any of the theatrical tribe are now old enough to remember.*

* My friend Mr. Const related to me a circumstance which perhaps may be considered conclusive that "Dagger" was a name given to him in ridicule. It is well known that Garrick used to practise his gestures before a glass, particularly when

It appears that he had full confidence in his own theatrical merit ; for one night when Garrick was performing *Ranger*, and was running off the stage with *Jacintha*, he stumbled against Marr, who stood too near and was pushed aside. Looking after Garrick, and thinking he was out of hearing, Marr folded his arms and was heard to say to himself, "*Ranger!*—give me but your eyes and I will play *Ranger* with you for any sum." Garrick's eyes, indeed, were generally allowed to be most brilliant and piercing.

Marr had a turkey presented to him, and meeting a friend as he was carrying it through the streets, he was asked what he was going to do with it. He said he was going to present it to Mr. Garrick. His friend told him that Mr. Garrick would not accept it. Marr, however, determined to persevere. Mr. Garrick declined the offer, observing that he had plenty of turkeys at Hampton, and desiring him to keep it for his own family. Marr however was so pressing that, rather than mortify him, Mr. Garrick agreed to accept it. On his return Marr met the same friend, who asked him if Mr. Garrick had taken the turkey. "Taken it?" said Marr, "ay, he would have taken it if it had been a roll and treacle."

The odd misanthropic humour of Marr, as his he had to utter a soliloquy. One day when Marr was waiting for Garrick in his dressing-room, he went before the glass and repeated the following passage in the tragedy of *Macbeth* :—"Is this a dagger that I see before me?" throwing himself into a tragic attitude, and was so pleased with his own performance that he exclaimed, "Well done—better than Garrick!" Garrick had, unperceived, entered the room, and walking softly up to Marr, tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Well done, Dagger."

conduct was in general correct, never offended his brethren of the stage, and was entirely thrown aside when he quitted it. My father described him as a well-informed man of gentlemanly manners.

It is well known that Garrick was fond of playing sportive tricks upon his friends, and this disposition is alluded to by Goldsmith in his "Retaliation." One afternoon, when he expected Dr. Monsey to call on him, he desired the servant to conduct the doctor into his bed-room. Garrick was announced for King Lear on that night, and when Monsey saw him in bed he expressed his surprise, and asked him if the play was to be changed. Garrick was dressed, but had his night-cap on, and the quilt was drawn over him, to give him the appearance of being too ill to rise. Monsey expressed his surprise, as it was time for Garrick to be at the theatre to dress for King Lear. Garrick, in a languid and whining tone, told him that he was too much indisposed to perform himself, but that there was an actor named Marr, so like him in figure, face, and voice, and so admirable a mimic, that he had ventured to trust the part to him, and was sure that the audience would not perceive the difference. Monsey in vain expostulated with him on the hazard which he would incur of public displeasure, as it was impossible that the attempt should succeed. Garrick pretended to be worse, and requested Monsey to leave the room that he might get a little sleep, but desired him to attend the theatre and let him know the result. As soon as the doctor quitted the room, Garrick jumped out of bed and hastened to the theatre. Monsey, partly in compliance with Garrick's desire and partly from curiosity to witness so extraordinary an experi-

ment, attended the performance. Having left Garrick in bed, Monsey was bewildered by the scene before him, sometimes doubting, and sometimes being astonished at the resemblance between Garrick and Marr. At length, finding that the audience were convinced of Garrick's identity, Monsey began to suspect that a trick had been practised upon him, and hurried to Garrick's house at the end of the play; but Garrick was too quick for him, and had resumed his situation in bed: having drawn the quilt over part of the dress of King Lear which he had not time to remove, he was found by Monsey in the same apparent state of illness. Some friends of Garrick who had been let into the secret, and were present at the performance, witnessed and enjoyed the perplexity of Monsey during the whole. As Monsey himself was inclined to play tricks with his friends, this whimsical deception was deemed but retributive justice on the part of Garrick, and Monsey the next day shared in the laugh at his own expense, determining however to retaliate, and he probably revenged himself on the first opportunity. No persons could take more liberties with each other than Garrick and Monsey, and none could be more prolific in prompt and facetious abuse.

PARSONS. I had the pleasure of knowing this actor, who was one of the best comic performers within my remembrance. He began the profession with true comic humour, which, combined with great observation of the living world, enabled him to become an exact representative of the characters within the province of his powers. He was originally a true natural actor, but without losing sight of nature, he latterly seemed disposed to reduce acting to a system.

He told anecdotes without labour and with strong effect. I observed him particularly in company, and have heard him examine a story when related by another, as a mechanic would examine the structure of an instrument, noticing in a low voice the several parts of the narrative, whether sly, ironical, sarcastic, or ludicrous, yet not in such a manner as to disturb the narrator.

His Foresight was admirable; and here I may properly notice the variations of fashion, for the very dress that Wilks, a celebrated actor in the time of Betterton and Booth, used to wear when he performed Sir Harry Wildair, was identically the same as that which Parsons wore in Foresight. He was excellent in clowns, drunken men, and old coxcombs, and always contented himself with what the author had written. He was somewhat of a cynical disposition in general, but, though warm, never intentionally rough to individuals. The public hardly need be reminded of his excellence in Crabtree, and Sir Fretful Plagiary.

He had skill in landscape-painting, was very fond of pictures, and particularly of the works of Wilson, of which I have seen some of his copies, which displayed considerable merit.

EDWIN. This actor was another proof of the vicissitudes of public taste. When he first appeared at the Haymarket Theatre, in the time of Foote, in one of the plays written by that author, Edwin had so much of the grimace of a country actor, so disagreeable a voice, such an uncouth form, and such a shambling gait, that he made a very unfavourable impression, and was actually hissed when I was in the theatre. Yet he gradually grew upon the audi-

ence, and at last became one of the chief comic favourites of the public, particularly in the whimsical farces of Mr. O'Keeffe, in several of which, characters were designed expressly for him, and he fully executed the design of the author. In private life he was a coarse vulgar man, much addicted to drinking and swearing, seldom, if ever, uttering a sentence without an oath.

MOODY. I was but slightly acquainted with this actor, yet what I knew of him convinced me that he was a very shrewd man, but too fond of money. He, indeed, made no scruple to acknowledge himself a miser. A friend of his, named Barford, whom I knew, called on him one day in summer and found him cutting wood. Barford offered to help him, and devoted an hour or two to that occupation, even during the heat of the day. At length he became thirsty, and asked Moody for some beer. Moody fetched a bottle, drew the cork, and gave Barford a tumbler full. He then put the cork in, and was going to take it away. Barford stopped him, and said he should want more. "I own," replied Moody, "you have deserved it, but it goes to my heart to give it you."—He once lent money to Mr. Brereton the actor. Brereton did not return it immediately, and Moody waited with some degree of patience. At length the first time Moody met him, he looked earnestly at him, and vented a kind of noise between a sigh and a groan. He repeated this interjection whenever he met Brereton, who at length was so annoyed, that he put his hand in his pocket and paid him. Moody took the money, and with a gentler aspect said, "Did I ask you for it, Billy?"

I dined with him once at Mr. Kemble's, when he

began to exhibit signs of age. Mr. Kemble during the whole time called him Gaffer, and a more appropriate appellation could hardly have been given to him, as he displayed a kind of venerable rustic aspect. He mingled little in conversation, but during a pause suddenly broke out into an anecdote of a ludicrous kind, which diverted the company, and he then relapsed into silence. He had been a handsome man. His features were regular and expressive, but his person was stout and heavy. He had a powerful and well-toned voice. In low Irish character, he had no competitor in his day, and Churchill pays a liberal compliment to him and his country, in "The Rosciad." His knowledge of the world, and good sense, enabled him to do justice to all the characters he represented; but as he became larger in person he grew sluggish and torpid in his acting. His manners were not suited to the Irish Gentleman, and though he acted with strength and effect, his Major O'Flaherty was much surpassed by the late Mr. Johnstone, who if he did not exceed Moody in Foigard, was fully equal to him.

Moody's Sir Sampson Legend was an admirable performance. I sat once with Dr. Wolcot at "Love for Love," and he said he thought it the most perfect assumption of character he had ever seen. His Adam, in "As You Like It," was much admired, but by his accent he certainly made Adam an Irishman. He lived on Barnes Common, on retiring from the stage, and dated his letter to the eight performers who had entered into opposition to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, from "an obscure corner of the Thames." He encouraged them

to persevere, and ludicrously said in his letter, "Do ye want any money?" though, if they had, he was probably the last person from whom they could have reason to expect it. He grew at last so negligent in his acting, that his Major Oldfox was a mass of torpid languor; and when he appeared in one of the witches in "Macbeth," his boots were plainly seen under her petticoats. The last time I ever saw him was at the late Mr. Weltje's, at Hammersmith, where he called as he went to Shepherd's Bush, his last residence. The conversation happened to turn on Mr. Sheridan, who was then alive, and who survived Moody. Some considerable arrears of salary had been due to Moody, who had threatened to go to Stafford, for which Sheridan was then a candidate, and to state his case to the electors. He then soon obtained his money.

The conversation, as I have observed, turning upon Sheridan the last time I saw Moody, he said, "I have the highest respect for Mr. Sheridan; I honour his talents, and would do anything to show my friendship for him, but take his word." Having seen him nearly in the prime of life, I was shocked, at this last meeting, to see the vast alteration in his person. His handsome manly countenance was pallid, wrinkled, and cadaverous. His robust frame had become feeble, and he required help in walking, but I saw in his notice of Mr. Sheridan, that his master passion, the love of money, had by no means partaken of his general decay.

The earlier part of his theatrical life had been passed in Jamaica, and being accustomed to the manners of the negroes, the part of Mungo was originally intended for him; but Dibdin, the author

of "The Padlock," wished to perform it himself, and it was impossible that anybody could have performed it with more spirit, humour, and character. The afterpiece itself was the most popular within my remembrance. It had the support originally of the elder Bannister, Vernon, Dibdin, and Mrs. Arne, wife of Michael Arne, who was esteemed the best singer of her time, but who unhappily died in early life.

CHAPTER II.

CHARLES MACKLIN. I knew this actor in the decline of his life, or rather in his old age. He was a man of an irritable disposition, but very civil and affable when not contradicted. The first time I had any personal intercourse with him was in the front boxes of Covent Garden Theatre. He was accustomed to express his opinions aloud, if any thing struck him on the stage. In that audible manner he said something which did not appear to me to be well-founded, and I ventured to express a different opinion;—the partition of the boxes only between us. Whether he assented to my opinion, and was too proud to concur, or whether his irascible temper resented my forwardness, I know not, but he immediately raised his voice loud enough to be heard all over the theatre, and said—"Write down what you have said, Sir, and I will answer it." I was awed into silence, for two reasons,—one, because I was really too diffident to answer this vociferous

ferous speech of the veteran ; and the other, because I was afraid that people at a distance might suppose I had insulted him ; I therefore made no reply.

Some years after this, I met him at the house of Merlin, the great mechanic, in Prince's Street, Hanover Square. Merlin attended him with great respect, and displayed all his curious mechanical works to him. Macklin was delighted, and seemed to be particularly gratified with a stool on which he turned himself about with ease ; and he uttered many humorous sallies on the occasion. When he had sufficiently diverted the persons present, and gratified his own curiosity with the extraordinary skill and ingenuity which all Merlin's works displayed, Macklin quitted his movable seat, and, looking at Merlin, uttered these words, with a gravity almost solemn : " Sir, if I were a despotic monarch, I would have you confined in a room ; I would supply all your wants and wishes ; I should then say to you, for the benefit of mankind, THINK !" The last word he pronounced in the most emphatic manner, and then retired respectfully from the company. The beginning of this speech, and the awful manner in which it was delivered, for a moment seemed to terrify Merlin, but the complimentary conclusion evidently gave him much pleasure.

When Macklin was announced for Macbeth, at Covent Garden Theatre, my father's old friend, Mr. Brooke, told me he would write to Macklin for an order, and that if I would take it, I should go with him to the play. I took the note, which contained a request for an order for his old friend Jemmy Brooke. Macklin wrote an answer in my presence, which I well recollect was in the following words :—

“ Mr. Macklin presents his compliments to his old friend Jemmy Brooke. He always valued the man, and the pleasure of thinking he was his friend; wishes to increase the idea, and begs he will accept the enclosed order for two.”

I remember to have dined with Macklin at the house of a clergyman named Clarke, who had paid Opie for a portrait of him. The Rev. Mr. Whalley, the editor of the works of Ben Jonson and of Beaumont and Fletcher, was of the party. This learned, intelligent, and pleasant gentleman, who, I believe, was one of the masters of Merchant Tailors' School, was afterwards, as I understood, obliged to leave this country, having, like myself, been ensnared by a false friend to accept bills, which he was unable to discharge. I am afraid that this respectable gentleman, acute critic, and agreeable companion, was never able to return to England. I remember that though the party was made chiefly on account of Macklin, he said, that if a man was thought of importance enough to have his portrait painted, he ought to be paid for lending his features. Whether this remark was intended as a hint to our host, I know not, but it illustrates the rough and interested character of Macklin.

The character of Macbeth had been hitherto performed in the attire of an English general; but Macklin was the first who performed it in the old Scottish garb. His appearance was previously announced by the Coldstream March, which I then thought the most delightful music I had ever heard; and I never hear it now without most pleasing recollections. When Macklin appeared on the bridge, he was received with shouts of applause, which

were repeated throughout his performance. I was seated in the pit, and so near the orchestra, that I had a full opportunity of seeing him to advantage. Garrick's representation of the character was before my time: Macklin's was certainly not marked by studied grace of deportment; but he seemed to be more in earnest in the character than any actor I have subsequently seen.

Here I must stop for a moment to say, that when Mr. John Kemble first performed the part, he sent a note to me, requesting I would be present, saying, "*My soul and body on the action, both!*" I well recollect his performance. It was animated with more spirit than I had ever seen in his previous efforts; and they who saw his Pierre, after he resigned Jaffier, and in which he exhibited the most gallant ardour, may form some conception of his mode of expressing the fiery passages of Macbeth. I often saw him afterwards in the same part, and ventured to tell him that he never equalled his first performance. "Why surely, Taylor," said he, "you must be wrong. What! do you think I have not improved in twenty years?" This, however, he said in perfect good-humour.

To return to Macklin. My friend Arthur Murphy admitted his want of grace, but contended for his correctness, judgment, and energy, happily styling his performance as "*a black-letter copy of Macbeth.*"

I attended his performance two nights after. A party had been raised against him, consisting, as reported, of the friends of Reddish; and he experienced a mixed reception, but applause predominated. He announced his intention of developing the conspiracy which had been raised against him, on

his next appearance. I was again present. He came forward in his usual dress, and was well received. The audience called for a chair, on which he sat, and began his story. He offered, however, no satisfactory proof, and the audience began to murmur. He then said he had authority upon which he could confidently rely; and in a pathetic tone, putting his hand before his eyes as if he was shedding tears, said: "It was my wife." The audience then expressed their disapprobation, and would hear no more. He was, however, again announced for Macbeth; and desirous of witnessing the end of the affair, I went the third time. The opposing party had then gained the ascendant, and he was saluted with a violent hiss as soon as he appeared; and this hostility was so determined, that he went through the part in dumb show, for not a word could be heard; yet silence and applause attended all the other performers. I did not attend on the fourth night, but met a friend who had just left the theatre, and who told me that a board was brought forward on the stage, on which was written, "*Mr. Macklin is discharged from this theatre.*"

He had certainly given no provocation for this hostility, except to certain critics who presumed to think that he had no right to attempt a part so different from his usual style of acting. He discovered some of the party, brought an action against them, and they were cast. On hearing the verdict in the court, Macklin arose, and addressing the Judge, declared that he did not seek for any damages, but only wished to vindicate his character, and to support the rights of his profession. The Judge

said : “ Mr. Macklin, I have often admired your talents, but you have never acted better than on this occasion.” After being discharged from Covent Garden Theatre, Macklin went to Ireland, where, being a native of the country, and admired as an actor, he was well received.

Many years elapsed, when he returned to London, resumed his situation at that theatre, and appeared in his favourite part of Shylock. His memory, however, was evidently impaired ; and after several attempts to repeat the character, he was at length obliged to relinquish the stage. Not having provided for old age, he was in danger of being reduced to a necessitous condition, but his friend Arthur Murphy issued proposals for publishing by subscription his play of “ The Man of the World,” and the farce of “ Love à la Mode,” to which was prefixed a print of himself, from a very strong likeness by Opie. The subscription was warmly patronized, and I had the pleasure of contributing my mite on the occasion.

Macklin’s devotion to the stage continued long after he had quitted it. He was, of course, indulged by the late Mr. Harris with the freedom of the theatre, when he frequently took his station in the first row of the pit ; and if an actor’s voice did not reach him, he was sure to get up, and in a commanding tone say—“ Speak louder, Sir, I cannot hear you.” The actors, in general, tolerated his peculiarities, and he lived upon good terms with them. He had not, however, relinquished his dramatic pen : for he met me one day, and told me, that he would fix a day when he would give me a beefsteak ; that the windows should be shut and the door locked after din-

ner, and he would read to me a comedy which he had written. His increasing infirmities, however, prevented his making the appointment, and I therefore probably escaped from a trial of patience; for, as he was of an overbearing disposition, I should have been obliged to acquiesce in the propriety of all I was to hear, or expose myself to the violence of his temper.

His origin was doubtful; but I remember he told me, when I had become better acquainted with him, that when he first came to London, he went to a relation of his mother, who kept a public house in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, where there were then but few houses, and, as I understood, acted as a waiter. Tired and ashamed of this situation, he returned to Ireland, and joined a strolling company of actors. At length he obtained a situation on the Dublin stage, and afterwards in London. He told me that his first performance of Shylock was in Lord Lansdown's alteration of Shakspeare's play, which was brought forward under the title of "The Jew of Venice;" and that it was for his performance in this play that the following well-known couplet was written upon him:

This is the Jew
That Shakspeare drew.

He said the pit was at that period generally attended by a more select audience than were to be seen there at the present time. As far as I can recollect, the following were his words:—"Sir, you then saw no red cloaks, and heard no pattens in the pit, but you saw merchants from the city with big wigs, lawyers from the Temple with big wigs, and physicians from the coffee-houses with big wigs; and the whole exhibited such a formidable grizzle,

as might well shake the nerves of actors and authors." His reputation being established, he was then engaged by Mr. Fleetwood for Drury Lane Theatre.

Dr. Wolcot and I were one evening at the Rainbow in King Street, Covent Garden, a coffee-house where we used often to sup, when Macklin came into one of the boxes. As the doctor wanted to have some intercourse with the veteran, and as I was acquainted with him, we joined him, and were glad to find him in a talking mood. I found his memory much impaired, but he recollected facts, though he forgot names. My little acquaintance with theatrical history, however, enabled me to prompt him, and he told the following story nearly as I shall give it.

"Sir, I remember I once played the character of the boy who wears red breeches and offends his mother." "Jerry Blackaire, in 'The Plain Dealer,' I suppose," said I. "Yes, sir, that was the part. Well, sir, I played a great number of tricks to divert the audience; and the chief part was played by the surly, fat fellow, whose name I have forgot." "Probably Quin, sir," "Ay, sir, that was the man. Well, sir, when I went into the green-room, the surly, fat man began to scold me, and told me that while I played my tricks, it was impossible to have a chaste scene with me. I told him that, different as our cast was, I had the public to please as well as himself. 'But, sir,' said he, 'you must get rid of your tricks.' I said I could not. 'But, sir,' said he, 'you shall.' By this time I was provoked, and said, 'You lie;' upon which he threw an apple that he was mumbling into my face. Sir, I was a fighting cull in those days, and I paid him so well about

the face, that it swelled, and rendered him hardly articulate. He was obliged to go on the stage again, but he mumbled his part so much that he was hissed. He left the stage, and somebody went forward and said that he was suddenly taken ill. Whether he finished his part I don't remember, but I remember that at the end of the play he sent me a challenge, and said he should wait for me at the pillar in Covent Garden. But, sir, I was a pantomime cull in those days, and I sent word that I would come to him when the entertainment was over. But, sir, the manager, a sweet man, who was my great friend, resolved that nothing fatal should take place—I forget his name.” “Probably Fleetwood, sir.” “Ay, that was the man,—sent a message to the surly fellow at the pillar, and would make up a bed for me in the theatre for fear of consequences, and so the matter ended.”

I remember this pillar in the middle of Covent Garden. It had a large golden ball at the top, which I afterwards saw in Mr. Kemble's garden, in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury. Yet Macklin lost the friendship of Fleetwood by joining in an opposition to his intention of reducing the salaries of his actors; and this led finally to a rupture between Macklin and Garrick, though the latter behaved to him with great generosity, offering to divide his salary with him, on finding that he could not restore him to Fleetwood's favour. The whole transaction is stated by Mr. Murphy in his life of Garrick, and all the papers are given which passed on the occasion. Macklin's case was drawn up by Mr. Corbyn Morris, a literary gentleman well known at that time, and Garrick's answer by Mr. Guthrie, the historian. It is strange

that Garrick did not draw up his own case, as he did not want literary powers either in prose or in verse.

It is well known that Junius addressed a brutal letter to Garrick, on a suspicion that he had given an information to his Majesty George the Third, that Junius would write no more. Garrick sent an answer to this letter in a very spirited yet respectful style. Junius's brief but abusive letter was not published at the time, but is seen in the last edition of Junius, in three volumes, including all the private correspondence between Junius and Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, and Junius and Wilkes, &c.; but as the letter from Junius to Garrick was not published at the time, Garrick's answer never appeared. I understand that it will appear among the Garrick papers, which will most probably be published before the present work is put to press, and will show Garrick in a very favourable light.

I will now proceed with some farther account of Macklin. He displayed the violence of his temper in thrusting his cane into the eye of Mr. Hallam, the uncle of Mrs. Mattocks, the admired comic actress. Mr. Hallam died in consequence of this wound, which perforated the brain, and Macklin was tried for the crime at the Old Bailey, but acquitted, because it did not proceed from *malice prepense*.

It was formerly the custom with the actors and many literary characters of the time, to walk in the Piazzas of Covent Garden in the middle of the day, and then to adjourn to dinner at the Bedford and other coffee-houses in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Murphy assured me that he was present at the following scene. Foote was walking with one party of

friends, and Macklin with another. Foote diverted his friends at the expense of Macklin, whom he not only turned into ridicule, but attacked his character on all points. Macklin was not less active in abusing Foote. This scene continued for some time, and the reciprocal attacks seemed to receive an additional stimulus as they passed each other. At length all the friends of both parties went away, and Foote and Macklin were left masters of the field; but Murphy lingered after he had taken leave of Foote, merely to see how the combatants would treat each other. To his surprise, Foote advanced to Macklin, and said in an amicable manner, "Macklin, as we are left alone, suppose we take a beefsteak together." "With all my heart," said Macklin; and they adjourned to the Bedford, as if they had been the best of friends. They afterwards, however, came to an open rupture.

Both gave public readings, in which they introduced the most vindictive abuse of each other. My father used to attend them both. Macklin severely arraigned the moral character of Foote, and his daring impudence in exposing private persons on the stage. Foote was sportive and inventive. Among other matters which my father told me of this warfare, he said Foote expressed his surprise that Macklin should have had a Latin quotation in his advertisement,—“but I have it,” said he: “when he was footman to a wild extravagant student at the University, and carried his master’s books to the pawnbroker’s, he probably picked up this quotation on the way.” After a pause, Foote added, “No, that could not be, for the fellow could not read at the time.” It hardly need be said that Macklin never

was in that capacity. The belligerents, however, with all the solemnity on one side, and all the wit on the other, tired the town, raised the siege, and became good friends again.

Macklin was a severe father. He gave his daughter, indeed, an accomplished education, and for some years came annually from Dublin, his head-quarters, to play his Shylock and Sir Archy, for her benefit, but he always made her pay for the journey and his performance, and she was always obliged to lend her gold-watch to a friend during his stay in London, lest he should insist upon having it, as he was too austere for her to dispute his will. Her figure was good, and her manner easy and elegant, but her face was plain, though animated by expression. She was a very sprightly actress, and drew from real life. Her character through life was not only unimpeached, but highly respected.

Churchill has described Macklin's face in very coarse terms in his "Rosciad;" and Quin said of him, "If God writes a legible hand, that fellow is a villain." At another time, Quin had the hardihood to say to Macklin himself, "Mr. Macklin, by the *lines*—I beg your pardon, sir—by the *cordage* of your face, you should be hanged."

In Shylock, in Sir Archy Macsarcasm, and in Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, he was, in my opinion, far superior to all his successors. Cooke might speak the Scottish language better, but he did not fill the stage so well, and had not such a biting humour. Mr. Young has lately performed Sir Pertinax with merited success.

I saw Macklin perform Iago, and Sir Paul Pliant, and other characters. In Iago, though doubtless he

was correct in his conception of the character, he was coarse and clumsy in his deportment, and nothing could be more rough than his manner of stabbing Emilia, and running from the stage, in the last scene. His Sir Paul was not wanting in noisy humour, but was rude in action. He was too theoretical for nature. He had three pauses in his acting—the first, moderate ; the second, twice as long ; but his last, or “grand pause,” as he styled it, was so long, that the prompter, on one occasion, thinking his memory failed, repeated the cue, as it is technically called, several times, and at last so loud, as to be heard by the audience. At length Macklin rushed from the stage, and knocked him down, exclaiming, “The fellow interrupted me in my grand pause.”

Macklin had a son, who I believe held a place in a government office, and according to report died in India. His features were even more plain than those of his father. I never heard that he was at all distinguished for talents. He was once pointed out to me as the son of Macklin, and I saw him again. He was a person of whom nothing was heard either good or bad.

There are two Lives of Macklin, one in a single volume written by his and my old friend Mr. Cooke the barrister, the author of “The Life of Foote,” and many temporary pamphlets, besides a very good poem entitled “Conversation.” Here I may relate a circumstance which manifests an extraordinary revolution in the life of a conspicuous character. A lieutenant in the royal navy had written a political pamphlet, but being called to his duty, was not able to see it through the press. He therefore placed it

in the hands of a bookseller, desiring that he would give it to some literary man, who, for duly preparing it for publication, should have half the profits. The bookseller gave it Mr. Cooke, who soon discharged his duty. The work was published, and the profits were thirty pounds, all of which was given to Mr. Cooke, who took his portion, and reserved the other half for the author whenever he should call for it. Many years elapsed and he heard nothing of him. At length a gentleman called on him, told his name, and declared himself to be the author of the pamphlet, telling him, he knew that fifteen pounds were due to him on account of the pamphlet, and adding, he was ashamed to take it, but that "his poverty and not his will" consented, as he had a wife and an increasing family. Mr. Cooke had the money ready for him, which the stranger took, and expressed his gratitude at parting. This necessitous author was the late Lord Erskine.

This fact may be depended on, upon the unquestionable authority of Mr. Cooke.

The other "Life of Macklin" in two volumes was written by a literary gentleman who was reputed to be a son of Macklin. Mr. Cooke's, however, was likely to be the most authentic account, as he had known Macklin from an early period, and gave in it a general history of the stage during Macklin's time.

It has been generally understood that Dr. Johnson alluded to Macklin when he spoke of a person whose conversation was "a perpetual renovation of hope, with a constant disappointment." As far as I had an opportunity of judging, the description was just. Macklin was fond of talking, and generally had all the talk to himself, for the company were unwilling

to interrupt a man at his very advanced age, expecting that something of historical, political, or theatrical matter would be learned from him. He mentioned Booth, Wilks, and Cibber; and when on the eve of telling a story of one, he rambled from one to the other, and nothing connected could be obtained. He mentioned Mrs. Oldfield with so much warmth and admiration, that we expected to hear something of her private history, or of her acting; yet all we learned was, that she had lived with Mr. Arthur Mainwaring, which all the world knew.

Booth's widow, he said, who upwards of forty years after the death of her husband, placed a monument to his memory in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, (and whose maiden name was Santlow,) was an admirable dancer, and had a very fine head of hair, which, in the middle of a dance, she always contrived to throw over her neck and shoulders in a very interesting and picturesque manner.

The hours, however, did not pass without amusement, for it was gratifying to see a man so much advanced in life with high spirits and strong lungs, particularly as we were buoyed up all the time by the expectation of hearing something entertaining, nor were we altogether disappointed. There was a print from Opie's portrait, which accompanied Macklin's works as published by subscription by his friend Arthur Murphy.

The last time I ever saw Macklin was in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, during a very severe frost, when the snow had hardened on the ground. He was well muffled up in a great coat, and walked to and fro with great vigour. I addressed him, and said, "Well, Mr. Macklin, I suppose you are com-

paring the merits of former actors with those of the present day." "The what of the present day?" said he in a very loud tone; "the what, Sir?" in a louder tone, "the actors, Sir?" He repeated his question with a voice that made the whole street ring. "Perhaps, Sir," said I, "you will not allow the present race to be actors." "Good morning, Sir," said he, and abruptly parted from me, resuming his walk with extraordinary strength and speed.

His first wife, who was long before my time, I have always heard was an excellent actress. Plain as Macklin was when I knew him, my mother assured me that she remembered him to be a smart-looking dark man, and a very sprightly actor, even in juvenile parts, but hard in his manner, and apt to resort to his pauses, which he afterwards graduated as I have before mentioned.

I have perhaps dwelt too long upon Macklin, but as he was a popular actor, a good dramatic writer, and a distinguished person in his day, he ought not to be hastily dismissed, since very few in his profession have come before the public with equal pretensions to their favour.

CHAPTER III.

WITH MR. THOMAS SHERIDAN, the father of Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was so justly celebrated for his dramatic genius, political knowledge, and oratorical powers, I was slightly acquainted; sufficient, however, to convince me that he was a grave, sensible, and intelligent man, polite, but reserved in his manners. I saw him perform Hamlet and Brutus at the Haymarket Theatre, and as far as I recollect of his acting, Churchill has given a just description of him in his "Rosciad." His son, Brinsley, is said to have accounted for his not having seen Garrick so often as he wished, after he had once seen him, in consequence of having heard from his father that he himself was the best actor of the time; and as he considered his father rather a declaimer than an actor, relying then upon his father's judgment and veracity, he felt no curiosity to see Garrick. However, when he had seen him, he attributed his father's opinion of himself to that natural partiality with which we all estimate our own merits.

After the elder Mr. Sheridan had long relinquished acting, he joined with Mr. Henderson in public readings, for which they were well qualified by their respective talents. Mr. Sheridan took the graver, and Mr. Henderson the lighter and facetious department of these amusements, which were very

attractive. It was in this species of entertainment that Mr. Henderson brought into notice the humorous tale of John Gilpin, which he recited with so much spirit and comic effect that it drew public attention to the poems of Cowper in general, which, excellent as they are, particularly "The Task," were but little known at the time, though they are now justly in universal estimation.

Mr. Sheridan in his portion of the readings, introduced too much of his dissertation on elocution, which was by no means suited to the taste of a mixed audience, and was indeed heavy in effect. His recital of the works of others was very impressive, but his voice was, as Churchill describes it, "irregular, deep, and shrill by fits." He gave Shenstone's "Elegy on Jesse," in a very pathetic manner, but his chief excellence was in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," which he recited by heart, and in the most animated manner. Indeed I cannot think it possible for anybody to recite that poem in a more impressive manner or with stronger effect. The great charm, however, of these readings, was Mr. Henderson's John Gilpin, which rendered the tale popular in all quarters.

Here I cannot but regret that I had not the genius of Cowper for my tale of "Monsieur Tonson," which was admirably recited by Mr. Fawcett, was not less popular in its day, and drew crowded audiences to Freemasons' Tavern. Several of the actors, among whom were Mr. John Palmer, Mr. Burton, and many provincial performers, called on me requesting that I would read it to them that they might better understand the conceptions of the au-

thor. They should rather have applied to Mr. Fawcett, whose example would have been a more instructive lesson.*

The story has since been dramatized and expanded by Mr. Moncrief, a gentleman whom I have not the pleasure of knowing, but who has done me the honour to dedicate his humorous farce to me.

I must again refer to the readings, because they are connected with a ludicrous anecdote. Mr. Henderson's facetious readings rendered the entertainment so popular and attractive that it must have been very profitable to the performers; but notwithstanding the emoluments, Mr. Sheridan expressed some discontent, "For," said he, "I wanted the readings to be rather instructive than diverting, and calculated to attract the select and judicious, but Mr. Henderson has frustrated my intention by *bringing in the whole town*." Those who knew the grave character of the elder Mr. Sheridan, and his fondness for his favourite subject, elocution, will not be surprised at his whimsical disappointment.

With MR. THOMAS KING, generally called TOM KING from his easy manners and facetious talents, I was well acquainted. Churchill says of him,

'Mongst Drury's sons he comes and shines in brass.

It has been supposed by some that the critical poet alluded to his performance of Brass in the comedy of

* As I was one morning knocking at the door of a friend, a decent-looking person, but with rough manner, addressed me, abruptly saying, "Are you the author of Monsieur Tonson?" I simply answered, "I own my guilt." "I thought so," said he, and went away with equal abruptness; and if this may be considered a species of fame, I have seen myself pointed at in coffee-houses on the same account.

"The Confederacy," but this is a mistake. He was indeed admirable in that character, but the poet alluded to his general excellence in characters of a bold and spirited nature, such as the bucks and bloods of that time, as well as to the daring and intrusive characters of the old comedies.

King possessed a shrewd mind, and copied his characters from real life, and from the manners of any of his predecessors. He was admirable in story-telling in private company, and when any persons beat about the bush to draw from him a particular story, he always stopped them and said, "I see what you are at, don't give yourself any trouble," and he would then begin to tell a facetious anecdote, which required some degree of acting, as if it was some narrative of the day. My friend Donaldson, of whom I have given some account, was his schoolfellow at Westminster.

To show the revolutions of a theatrical life, Tom King, who afterwards became one of the chief comic actors of his time, told his friend Donaldson that, soon after he adopted the profession, he walked all the way from Beaconsfield to Southwark to procure money from a friend to buy a pair of stockings, and when he walked back to perform the next day, his share of the profits was eighteen-pence, and his proportion, on a division, of the ends of candles.

Poor King unfortunately had an incurable propensity to gaming. After frequent and heavy losses he won one evening about 7000*l*. He immediately left the gaming-table and ran home. His wife was in bed. He fell upon his knees by the side of the bed and called vehemently for a bible. Unhappily there was no such unprofessional book in the house, but

King remained on his knees and solemnly swore that he would never visit a gaming-table again. His propensity, however, returned upon him, and he ventured his all one night, which was won by a colonel in the British army, a very rich man, not without a strong suspicion that he was guilty of false play; and the suspicion was so near proof, that he went to all the clubs of which he was a member and erased his name from the books, conscious that, when an explanation took place, he would have been dismissed with infamy from them all. This man, who was of a good family, after his conduct towards King, was discarded from society, and used to wander alone through the streets, an object of contempt to all who had before known and respected him.

King once kept his carriage, had a house in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and a villa at Hampton, near the mansion of his friend Garrick, who held him in high regard; but his fatal turn for gaming deprived him of these advantages and rendered him a poor man for the remainder of his life. He had for several years been attached to Miss Baker, a celebrated dancer at Drury Lane Theatre, and happening to break his leg, and being attended by her with great kindness during his illness, he married her on his recovery, and they lived many years as happily together after such a change of fortune, the result of his own imprudence, as could well be expected.

It is lamentable to state that this affectionate wife, who had shared prosperity with him, when, besides the advantages which I have mentioned, he enjoyed a large weekly salary, and a very productive annual

benefit, was after his death obliged to live in a garret in Tottenham Court Road, supported chiefly by those who knew her in better days. She bore the reverse of her fortune with patience and submission; and even with her scanty means, by her taste rendered her apartment an agreeable scene of simple decoration.

King possessed literary talents and a turn for poetry. I called on him one morning when he lodged in a respectable house in Store Street, Bedford Square, and as he had not left the stage and his benefit was approaching, I advised him to throw into rhyme a story which I had heard him tell in prose, as it would be something novel on the occasion. He complied with my advice, and soon after read to me his versification, in which he had retained all the humorous points of the story, and the whole was written with great spirit. He recited it on the stage with good effect.

There are many persons who hold poetry in contempt, and some even in horror, but if King had devoted himself as much to the Muse as he did to the gaming-table, he might have added lustre to his character, have profited by his literary effusions, have ended his life in affluence, and his faithful and affectionate wife would have inherited the comfort of an elegant independence, in some degree to console her for the loss of her husband.

I had some opportunities of rendering him literary service, which always afforded me pleasure, and which he acknowledged with much more gratitude than that service could possibly have deserved. His Tom in "The Conscious Lovers," was excellent,

so was his Trappanti and Lissardo. Lissardo was the last character I saw him perform. While he stood, he acted with his former spirit and humour; but when he fell upon his knees, and Don Felix held the sword at his breast, he was unable to get up, and the master was obliged to help the servant to regain his feet.

These characters, and others of a similar description, were exactly suited to his talents; but in the real fine gentleman there was a kind of briskness in his manner and a sort of subtle look in his features, by no means consistent with high-bred deportment. In this respect he was greatly eclipsed by his powerful competitor Woodward, who could play the high-bred gentleman or fop, and was equally excellent in all the other characters in which King was chiefly successful. Poor King! I wrote an occasional address on his death, which I had the pleasure to hear was very gratifying to his widow.

I first saw Woodward in the part of the Copper Captain, and it is not possible for me to describe the nature, truth, and perseverance with which he gave the laugh introduced into the character; but I recollect well that it spread the contagion of laughter over the whole audience. I afterwards saw King several times in the same character, and it is but justice to his memory to say, that his laugh, though quite different from that of Woodward, was not less natural, and hardly less effective. Yet after all there is no adequate reason for such a laugh; for though the Captain might be glad that Estifania had disposed of his baubles, a smile would have been sufficient, particularly as it only served to convince him that his wife was a cheat, as well as otherwise a

frail woman. It reminds me of what Churchill says of love in Falstaff:—

When Falstaff stands detected in a lie,
Why without reason rolls love's glassy eye?
Why, there's no cause, at least no cause we know,—
It was the fashion twenty years ago.

With equal justice the laugh may be condemned, but it is so rooted to the stage by tradition, that no actor must now assume the part of the Copper Captain who is not provided with a good contagious laugh, however ably he may otherwise support the whole of the character.

MR. WILLIAM LEWIS. I saw this gentleman the first night of his appearance on the London stage, and his performance of Belcour, in "The West Indian," was so spirited and characteristic, that he was soon distinguished by the title of Belcour Lewis. His figure was light, and his manner easy. He was a fit successor to Woodward, whose characters he in general inherited. He also appeared with success in tragic parts, and I read a criticism on his acting in Hannah More's tragedy of "Percy," actually written by Mr. Garrick by desire of his friend Bate Dudley, afterwards Sir Henry. This criticism was highly favourable.

Mr. Lewis, with whom I had long the pleasure of being acquainted, in a conversation which I once had with him, declared that he prided himself on having clearly distinguished his mode of acting parts in the old comedies, such as Archer, Ranger, &c. and the wild characters in modern plays, such as those introduced by O'Keeffe, and followed in the comedies of Reynolds and Morton,—characters that show a lively invention in all of those authors, but

are very different from those of Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh, whose characters, though highly coloured, were yet drawn from life. Still, however, from observation of Mr. Lewis's acting, I cannot but think that, whatever his merit might be in what may be styled the legitimate characters of the elder dramatists, he was chiefly successful in the wild sketches of the writers of a later date. His *Mercutio* was excellent, and I have heard it warmly praised by the late Mr. John Kemble, who was always liberal where praise was justly due, but not otherwise.

Mr. Lewis, like King, abounded in anecdotes, which he related without hesitation, and with great humour, particularly such as involved Irish humour and manners. My late friend Mr. Cooke, an Irishman, told me that nothing could be more exact than Mr. Lewis's representation of the bucks and bloods of Dublin, who were of a gayer yet more determined order than those who formerly distinguished themselves in London, but were nearly extinct when I first began to regard the passing world, and the magistracy was more regularly settled. We now, indeed, never hear of such riotous adventurers and enemies of watchmen, as those who existed about the middle, or, perhaps, earlier in the reign of George the Third.

Mr. Lewis, though so active and spirited in the representation of the eccentric parts of modern comedy, was polite in his manners, and peaceable in his disposition, but ready to support his character with the most determined courage, if occasion required, of which instances occurred which it is not necessary to mention. He was social, but not too convivial or inclined to dissipation, as, indeed, was

fully evinced by the large fortune which he bequeathed to his family. He was a kind husband and father, and possessed a very intelligent and amiable wife, whose memory, as well as that of her husband, I hold in sincere regard. He was not so zealous an admirer of Garrick as I expected from his general taste and judgment; but the Irish in general were partial to their countrymen, Barry and Mossop.

Mr. Lewis, indeed, was a native of Wales, but was taken so early to Dublin by his mother, who had married a second husband, that he naturally imbibed all the native peculiarities of the Irish taste. He made it a point, however, to become acquainted with the great British "Roscius," and told me that he found Mr. Garrick kind, attentive, and confidential.

Mr. Lewis observed that he had seen the mechanical parts of acting, such as pushing the chair in *Don Felix*, in order to be reconciled to *Violante*, Archer combing the wig, and actions of a similar description in other comic plays, executed with more address than by Garrick; but he candidly acknowledged that he ascribed the invention and introduction of them wholly to him, and added that Garrick's tragedy was irresistible, though he did not think altogether superior to what he had witnessed in Barry and Mossop.

I have often dined in company with Mr. Lewis, at the hospitable table of the late Mr. Harris, the proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre; and his gay and spirited anecdotes rendered him an admirable companion. He was, therefore, essentially different in private life from his great predecessor Woodward,

who, though so brisk and animated on the stage, was always silent and reserved, if not saturnine, in company. One of Mr. Lewis's sons reached the rank of Colonel in the service of the Honourable East India Company ; another went upon the stage ; and the youngest is at present the respectable proprietor and manager of the Liverpool Theatre. Mr. Lewis had also three amiable daughters, one of whom he had the misfortune to lose during his life. His widow survived him some years, and died sincerely regretted by all who were acquainted with her. The two remaining daughters live under the affectionate protection of their brother at Liverpool.

There are several portraits of Mr. Lewis, but the best is a whole-length, the size of life, in the character of the Marquis, in the farce of "The Midnight Hour," painted by Mr. Shee, the Royal Academician, now Sir Arthur Shee, and President of the Academy, which is not only an admirable characteristic likeness, but a work of great professional excellence.

One of the last original characters which Lewis performed was Jeremy Diddler, in the humorous farce of "Raising the Wind." The farce was brought forward on a Saturday night, and on that very night died the person who was justly considered the hero of the piece : this was no other than Bibb, a well-known character at that time, who accompanied Shuter in his expedition to Paris to win a wager. Though the person in question was not a theatrical performer, yet he was so much connected with theatrical performers, and acted so singular a part in the drama of life, that I may not improperly introduce him on the present occasion. He was the son of a

respectable sword-cutler in Great Newport Street. The father was a grave and prudent man, who gave his son a good education, and afterwards articted him to an engraver. Bibb practised the art some years, and I remember a print which he engraved, representing the interior of the Pantheon, in Oxford Street.

Bibb's print was not a work of high professional skill, but, from the number of the figures, and the large size of the plate, displayed more industry than could have been expected from a character that was afterwards marked by idleness and dissipation. I knew him very early in life, and occasionally saw him until near his death. He was much inclined to gaming, and took me once to a hazard-table in Gerard Street, Soho, where I saw Dr. Luzzato, an Italian physician, who visited my father, and was a very agreeable and intelligent man. Baddeley, the actor, was also there. A dispute arose between Baddeley and the doctor, which was likely to terminate seriously, but the rest of the assembly interposed, lest the *character of the house* should be called in question, and their nocturnal orgies suppressed. The house went under the name of the Royal Larder, which was merely a cover to conceal its real purpose, that of a place for the meeting of gamesters.

I was very young at the time, and being ignorant of the game, I had not courage to engage at the hazard-table. It was a meeting of a very inferior kind, for a shilling was admitted as a stake. I had a very few shillings in my pocket, which Bibb borrowed of me as the box came round to him, and lost every time. The house was kept by a man named Nelson, who afterwards was landlord of the George

Inn, opposite to Wyche Street, in Drury Lane. I shall have occasion to mention this man again.

How Bibb supported himself, having relinquished engraving, it would be difficult to conceive, if he had not levied taxes upon all whom he knew, insomuch that, besides his title of Count, he acquired that of "Half-crown Bibb," by which appellation he was generally distinguished, and according to a rough, and, perhaps, fanciful estimate, he had borrowed at least 2000*l.* in half-crowns.

I remember to have met him on the day when the death of Dr. Johnson was announced in the newspapers, and, expressing my regret at the loss of so great a man, Bibb interrupted me, and spoke of him as a man of no genius, whose mind contained nothing but the lumber of learning. I was modestly beginning a panegyric upon the doctor, when he again interrupted me with, "Oh! never mind that old blockhead. Have you such a thing as ninepence about you?" Luckily for him I had a little more.

There was something so whimsical in this incident, that I mentioned it to some friends, and that and others of the same kind doubtless induced Mr. Kenny to make him the hero of his diverting farce, called "Raising the Wind," already mentioned. Another circumstance of a similar nature was told me by Mr. Morton, whose dramatic works are deservedly popular. He told me that Bibb met him one day after the successful performance of one of his plays, and, concluding that a prosperous author must have plenty of cash, commenced his solicitation accordingly, and ventured to ask him for the loan of a whole crown. Morton assured him

that he had no more silver than three shillings and sixpence. Bibb readily accepted them, of course, but said on parting, "Remember I intended to borrow a crown, so you owe me eighteen-pence. This stroke of humour induced Morton to regret that Bibb had left him his debtor.

Bibb, in his latter days, devised a good scheme to raise the supplies. He hired a large room for the reception of company once a week, which he paid for only for the day. He then, with the consent of his friends, provided a handsome dinner, for which the guests paid their due proportion. There can be little doubt that many extraordinary characters assembled on these occasions. He told me his plan, and requested I would be one of the party. I promised I would attend, and regret that I was prevented, as so motley an assemblage must have afforded abundant amusement.

Bibb's father, knowing the disposition of his son, left him an annuity, which was to be paid at the rate of two guineas a week, and which never was to be advanced beyond that sum. This was, however, probably dissipated the next day, and, when expended, he used to apply to his sister, a very amiable young lady, who was married to a respectable merchant. Having been tried by frequent applications, the husband would not let him enter the door. Bibb then seated himself on the steps, and passengers seeing a man decently dressed in that situation, naturally stopped, and at length a crowd was collected. The gentleman then desirous of getting rid of a crowd, and probably in compliance with the desire of his wife, found it necessary to submit to her brother's requisition.

When I first became acquainted with Bibb, he had the manners of a gentleman with easy gaiety, having recently returned from travelling, as companion to a person of fortune. His conversation was enlivened with humour, and, perhaps, I might add with wit, but as he gradually departed from genteel society, and associated chiefly with gamblers, if not sharpers, his manners proportionately degenerated, and once sitting nearly opposite to him at a public dinner, having received a ticket from one of my friends, I was surprised to observe that all Bibb said, was accompanied by nods, winks, and by thrusting his tongue into his cheek. I could hardly believe that I had remembered him with a pleasing vivacity and well-bred manners.

Nothing could subdue the spirit of his character, for he would make a joke of those necessities under which others would repine, droop, and despair. His death was fortunate at the period when it happened, for it not only relieved him in old age from probable infirmities, which, if they had confined him at home, would doubtless have deprived him of all resources of an eleemosynary nature, but would have reduced him to absolute starvation. It was also, as I have before observed, fortunate, for he escaped the mortification of seeing his character brought upon the stage. The public journals of the Monday after his death were full of anecdotes of his extraordinary life. I may fairly add, that if he had been a man of fortune, with his talents, promptitude, and humour, he might have made a very respectable figure in life, and have been a useful member of society.

There are doubtless many in this metropolis who lead a life of expediency, like Bibb, but few who can

support their difficulties with such fortitude and cheerfulness as he did, or who, like him, can sport with fortune, and rather submit to live by degrading supplications, while cautiously avoiding to incur the severities of law.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. THOMAS DAVIES. This gentleman was many years on the stage, but left it partly because he never was able to obtain much theatrical reputation, though chiefly because he was a victim to the severity of Churchill in his "Rosciad."

I once had an opportunity of seeing Davies act, long after he had left the stage, when a benefit was given to him at Drury Lane Theatre; but whether during the management of Garrick, I do not recollect, though I believe it was granted by him. The play was "The Way of the World," and Davies was announced in the part of Fainall. There was a dull gravity in his acting, and his voice had a rumbling tone. It was, therefore, evident, that Churchill was hardly too severe in his criticism, but, as Davies was a scholar, a man of taste, and bore an honest character, the churlish poet ought to have passed over him entirely, or have been less severe. What part Davies had taken in politics, or what "*plots*" he had been concerned in, it is not now impossible to know; but as Davies was a staunch Whig, his political principles could not have been different from those of the satirist. Long after the death of Churchill,

Davies published his *Life of Garrick*, and at a later period gave three volumes of *Dramatic Miscellanies* to the world. In the latter work he, as often as occasion admitted, certainly manifested his political principles, but by no means inconsistent with rational loyalty.

His *Life of Garrick* is very creditable to his critical knowledge, and he generally appreciates the powers of the great actor with candour and judgment, though, at times, he certainly, by preferring others to him in some parts, seems to pay court to theatrical merits extant at the time when his work was published. The same courtesy appears also in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*, but in general the work evinces the taste of a critic, and the learning of a scholar. It is evident that he must have been a very diffusive reader, and he successfully applies what he has read to the subject before him. He sometimes, however, speaks as confidently of the merits of actors who existed before his time, as if he had actually witnessed their performances, though it is evident that he could only judge from written records, or personal information. The anecdotes which he introduces are amusing and appropriate, but sometimes his interpretation of difficult passages is too conjectural, and his emendatory criticism by no means satisfactory. Yet he differs modestly from the opinions of higher authorities, and is never confident in maintaining his own. He speaks with respect of Mr. G. Steevens as a commentator, but seems to have had a very indifferent opinion of his moral character.

The following extract from Mr. Davies's third volume presents Mr. Steevens in so unfavourable a

point of view, that as that gentleman will always retain a high reputation for his literary merits, I may properly introduce it as one among many rumours of the same description that were in circulation during his life, and were by those who knew him generally credited.

“Mr. Steevens,” says Davies, “in addition to his large note, (on a particular passage in Hamlet,) assures us that there was more illiberal private abuse, and peevish satire, published in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James the First, than in any other age except the present. This is not very clear to me; but happy is the man who can, with a good conscience, affirm he never was guilty of the base practice of wounding the fair reputation of others, or of disturbing the peace of families, by malicious and rancorous slander. The propagation of obloquy, to gain wealth and preferment, may admit of some exculpation; but of all abuse, that which is spontaneous and unprovoked is the most unaccountable. What does Mr. Steevens think of a gentleman, who, when at his country-seat, found no amusement so pleasing as writing libels upon his neighbours, and throwing them over the garden-walls, with the malignant design to torment those who had never offended him?”

The charge implied in this question I had often heard urged against Mr. Steevens long before I read this passage in Mr. Davies's work; and in corroboration of it, I shall insert what I heard from my late friend Arthur Murphy, whose dramatic works will always keep possession of the stage. Mr. Murphy said that he had been some time out of town after the successful exhibition of one of his plays, but I do

not recollect which. On his return to town Mr. Steevens called on him, and in the course of conversation asked if he had seen a severe attack on his play, in the *St. James's Chronicle*. Murphy said he had not. In a day or two after Mr. Steevens called on him again, and, referring to the same article, asked him if he had not seen it. Mr. Murphy asked him how long ago the article had appeared; Steevens told him about a fortnight. "Why, then," said Murphy, "would you have me search for it in the jakes, where only it now can probably be found?" There was something of apparent disappointment in the manner of Steevens, and it struck Mr. Murphy that he was probably the author. He therefore excused himself for putting an end to the interview then, pretending that he had some papers to examine; and as soon as Steevens had departed, Mr. Murphy set off post to the office of "*The St. James's Chronicle*," and requested to see the manuscript of the article in question. The late Mr. Baldwin obligingly complied, and Mr. Murphy found that it was in the handwriting of Steevens. Steevens denied that it was his handwriting, and by mutual consent the matter was referred to the decision of Dr. Johnson. Mr. Murphy submitted his proofs to the doctor, and Mr. Steevens attempted a defence, but the doctor deemed it so unsatisfactory, that all he said on the occasion was, that Mr. Steevens must hereafter "lead the life of an outlaw."

The late Mr. Kemble told me, upon the authority of Mr. Malone, that when Mr. Steevens called, during the doctor's last illness, to inquire how he was, the black servant went and told the doctor that Mr. Steevens waited below. "Where is he?" said the

doctor. "On the outside of the street-door," was the answer. "The best place for him," was the reply.

Mr. Steevens was accused of having treated his friend Mr. George Keate, a gentleman whose literary works are honourable to his talents, in the same manner with respect to one of those works, as he had acted towards Mr. Murphy's play.

Mr. Steevens was very intimate with Mr. Isaac Reed, a gentleman whose memory must be held in respect for his moral character, as well as for his literary attainments. Mr. Reed saw Mr. Steevens's last edition of "Shakspeare" through the press, and Mr. Steevens was accustomed to call at six in the morning for the proofs, which Mr. Reed laid at the door of his chambers in Staple Inn every night, that he might not be disturbed at so early an hour. Mr. Reed's veneration for Shakspeare, and desire to oblige his friend, induced him to be assiduous and punctual.

The following anecdote is told as a proof of the gratitude of Steevens. It is said that he employed a woman of the town, of some education and talents, to place herself at the door of Mr. Reed's chambers, and tell a pitiable tale of her distress and of the misfortunes which she had suffered. When Mr. Reed came home, she acted her part so well that he was strongly interested, and, as she said she was without a home, he offered her money to procure a bed where she could find one. In pursuance of the instructions which she had received, she said she was ignorant of that part of the town, and too weak to go to any other. Mr. Reed had but one bed, but rather than expose the poor woman to the necessity of wandering through the streets at a late hour, he

actually resigned his bed to her, and slept at a neighbouring coffee-house.

This despicable trick of Mr. Steevens, by which he intended to try the virtue of Mr. Reed, and perhaps afterwards to disgrace him by promulgating the incident, which he doubtless hoped would have had a different termination, only proved the humanity of Mr. Reed, and the malignant character of his pretended friend.

To return to Mr. Davies. I became acquainted with him soon after the death of Dr. Johnson; and having seen what I had written in a public journal in honour of the memory of the doctor, he treated me with more attention than I could reasonably have expected, considering the difference of our ages, for he was then very much advanced in life. There is one passage in the second volume of his *Miscellanies*, which I wish he had omitted, as it is illiberal in itself, and inconsistent with his general estimation of the character of Mr. Garrick.

It seems that Mr. Colman had suggested to Mr. Garrick the propriety of reviving some of those dramatic works, in which Burbage, Taylor, and Betterton, had distinguished themselves. "And here," said Mr. Davies, "I doubt somebody might hint, it were to be wished that Mr. Colman had not employed the names of those celebrated old comedians, as a powerful charm to prevail on Garrick to grant his request, who never wished to hear the name of any actor but one." Mr. Davies has here unwarily inserted a compliment to Mr. Garrick, rather than a sarcasm on him; for it implies that Mr. Garrick had not much confidence in the superiority of his powers, since he feared to be brought in com-

parison with those who had lived upwards of a hundred years before him, and two of them nearly twice that number.

In another part of his work, he observes that Garrick had no portraits but of himself in his house. They were, perhaps, presents from the several artists. Garrick never professed to be a collector of pictures, or a connoisseur in painting, though he had many valuable works of art, most of which were probably presented to him as tributes to his extraordinary talents. Mr. Davies, in his account of Congreve, has fallen into a mistake, where he says that Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough was so attached to him, that, after his death, she had a statue of him which was placed on her table at dinner, and that she addressed it as if alive. According to the information of Dr. Monsey, who was family physician to the Earl of Godolphin, the lady in question was the daughter of Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, who was married to the Earl of Godolphin.

Mr. Davies afforded a proof of the difficulty of combining two professions with success. His literary talents and learning would probably have raised him into independence as an author, or have procured the patronage of some distinguished person; or if he had contented himself with being merely a bookseller and publisher of the works of others, he might have acquired a large fortune, like many others in that business; but, carrying on both employments, he became embarrassed, and I believe died in a state of insolvency. His "very pretty wife," as Churchill calls her, I saw when I called on her husband. She was plain but neat in her attire, and in face and person exhibited the remains of beauty that justified the

poet's panegyric. She had a meek, dejected look, probably resulting from the situation of her husband, and the recollections of better days. She had been an actress of respectable but not distinguished talents, and maintained an unimpeachable character through life. I regret to add, that after all her moral and professional merits, I have heard she ended her days in a workhouse some years after the death of her husband.

It is impossible for me to state this melancholy fact without deeply lamenting the vicissitudes of fortune. Here we behold an amiable and accomplished woman, who would have been an example and an ornament to her sex in any condition of life, fall a victim to adversity, not arising from any want of prudence, and sink unknown into the grave; on the other hand we see a female profligate enjoy all the luxuries of life, and at her death honoured with a splendid funeral, and a pompous monument, bearing an inscription celebrating qualities moral and intellectual wholly without foundation. Both of these events have happened within my knowledge, and probably within that of innumerable others.

Mr. JOHN PALMER. I was very well acquainted with this actor, who in his proper sphere was one of the best I ever knew. He possessed a fine person, and an expressive face. His voice was powerful and of a good tone. Though comedy was his forte, he could perform the tyrannical parts of tragedy with great effect. He was calculated for all those parts in which King excelled, such as bucks, bloods, impudent footmen, &c. He particularly excelled in the delivery of sarcasm and irony, as was evident

in his Sneer in the farce of "The Critic." I have seen him perform both Brass and Dick in "The Confederacy," and he was equally excellent in both. When he performed a serious character, but not of the high tragic kind, such as Villeroy in the tragedy of "Isabella," he was elegant and impressive. His Stukely in "The Gamester" was excellent. Indeed I once heard Mrs. Siddons, and who could estimate theatrical merit with more judgment? once say, "When shall we see such a Villeroy and Stukely again?" He was not an educated man, but possessed a natural discernment, and seemed to be led by instinct to the characters most fit for his talents; but when he assumed the higher parts of tragedy, which required intellectual powers of no ordinary description, he was not successful; and for the same reason his Falstaff did not add to his reputation. In convivial characters he was justly admired, particularly Sir Toby in "Twelfth Night." As a general actor I have never seen his superior.

Though capable of giving full effect to comic parts, he took no part in conversation; yet he was very attentive to what passed, and proved by his manner that he not only understood fully the wit and humour of others, but enjoyed them. I have seen him in company with the present Mr. Colman, and could not but observe the ingenuity with which he varied his dumb-show admiration of the facetious sallies of that gentleman's inexhaustible vivacity. He was a well-bred man, but carried his courtesy to such an excess as to excite a suspicion of its sincerity. When he opened the Royalty Theatre, the patentees of Covent Garden naturally appealed to the magistracy to suppress it. My old and esteemed friend Mr. Const

was the counsel engaged by the patentees; and the performers at the Royalty Theatre were all taken into custody, but were released at the intercession of Mr. Palmer, upon a promise that they would appear at an appointed place next morning at twelve o'clock. The magistrates and Mr. Const were punctual. Mr. Palmer attended soon after, but without the rest of the performers. Mr. Const expressed his surprise that, after his solemn promise of bringing the other performers, they had not attended. Mr. Palmer's answer was, "I know your heart," meaning of course that Mr. Const was too humane to adopt any harsh measures towards them. Mr. Const renewed his requisition for their appearance, but received the same compliment on his benevolence. At length, finding Mr. Const was firmly determined that they should appear, Mr. Palmer left the room, apparently to fetch them. The magistrates, however, remained an hour or more, and then thinking it was in vain to expect Mr. Palmer or the performers, they broke up the meeting, but found on attempting to quit the room, that he had locked the door upon them. And here I may mention an extraordinary change in the condition of an individual.

When Mr. Colman the elder closed the door of Covent Garden Theatre upon his partners, Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, a journeyman carpenter, named Hyde, was employed by those gentlemen to force a passage into the house; and in the attempt to stop the Royalty Theatre, the same man, then Justice Hyde, was the most active magistrate engaged on the occasion, and on a business the reverse of his former employment. I was present with Mr. Arthur Murphy in the lower gallery of the

Royalty Theatre on its first opening. We could not obtain any other place. Mr. Palmer spoke an occasional address, which, from the attention which Mr. Murphy paid to it, I told him I suspected to be his composition. He confessed it was, but bade me be cautious, for he was then on friendly terms with the patentees, and knew of course that he was supporting an illegal measure.

The Rev. William Jackson was to have been a partner of the Royalty Theatre, if it could have obtained a legal toleration for performances. Jackson was a powerful writer, and supported the claims of Mr. Palmer, but the theatre never obtained a legal sanction in his time. When Palmer, after this attempt to establish a new theatre, found his way back to Drury Lane Theatre, he appeared to be all contrition, humility, and self-reproach before Mr. Sheridan, just as he acted the part of Joseph Surface in "The School for Scandal;" but in the midst of his professions of repentance, Mr. Sheridan stopped him with the utmost good-humour, and only said, "Palmer, you forget that I wrote the character." Indeed Palmer's general habit was so much in the manner of Joseph Surface, that it might have tempted the author to design the character for him.

CHAPTER V.

MR. JOHN KEMBLE. Having already said so much of this gentleman in a former part of the present work, I have little to add respecting him. His Hamlet, which made an unfavourable impression on me when I saw him perform it on the first night of his appearance in London, was so much improved by reflection and practice, that it really presented a model of theatrical excellence, and probably never will be exceeded in correct conception and dignified deportment. His Coriolanus was a masterpiece. He often paid me the compliment of consulting me on any passage of Shakspeare that appeared doubtful, and would listen with great attention to any opinion that differed from his own; and I do not recollect any occasion on which I had not reason to assent to his explanation of the text. But I never knew any person who was more ready to attend to the suggestions of others. He often desired that I would let him know where I did not approve of his acting; and his manner was so open and sincere, that I did not scruple to give my opinion, even to such a master of his art, and so acute a critic. He never spared pains to ascertain the meaning of what he or anybody thought doubtful.

I remember once, in compliance with his request, I told him I thought that in one passage of "Hamlet," Garrick as well as himself, and all other actors, were wrong in delivering it. The pas-

sage was where Horatio tells Hamlet that he came to see his father's funeral, and Hamlet says it was rather to see his mother's marriage, when Horatio observes "it followed hard upon." Hamlet replies,

Thrift, thrift, Horatio, the funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.

I observed that this passage was always given in anger, whereas in my opinion it ought to be delivered with ironical praise. He immediately took down a Polyglot Dictionary, and examined the derivation and accepted meaning of the word thrift in all the languages, and finding that it was always given in a commendatory sense, he thanked me, and always after gave the passage in the manner I had suggested.

I ventured to point out other alterations in "Hamlet" which it might appear vain in me to mention. Suffice it to say, that in hearing them he said, "Now, Taylor, I have copied the part of Hamlet forty times, and you have obliged me to consider and copy it once more." This is a proof of the labour and study which he devoted to his profession. It is but justice to the rest of his family, as well as to himself, to say they were all so perfect in their parts, that the prompter never was appealed to in their acting.

Though Mr. Kemble was of a jocular temper, and laughed as heartily in company as any person I ever knew, he was certainly not born to be a votary of Thalia in characters of a very lively and facetious description. When he assumed the part of Charles in "The School for Scandal," I believe he did so to please Mr. Sheridan, who was always alive and anxious respecting his own dramatic compositions.

In the evening which I passed with him and Mr. Richardson at the Bedford coffee-house, though he admitted Mr. Garrick to be probably the greatest actor that ever existed, yet, referring to the play of "Pizarro," of which he seemed to be as proud as he had reason to be of his original works, he observed that he thought Garrick could not have performed Rolla so well as Kemble. This opinion may be considered as a sort of parental bigotry, from which even the highest minds are not exempt.

Kemble at one period of his life was certainly rather inclined to the bottle, and under its influence was induced to be a little frolicsome, as will appear from some anecdotes which I have before related.

On the first representation of "The Mountaineers" at the Haymarket Theatre, I met him in the green-room at the end of the play, when he had performed the part of Octavian, and he asked me to take a glass with him at Mrs. Stephen Kemble's, who lodged in the Haymarket, and who was sister to my first wife. I objected, observing I was afraid he would keep me up too late. He said I need not be afraid, for that he lived at Turnham Green, to which he must go that night, and as the play succeeded, and was likely to have a long run, and he had a fatiguing part in it, he required rest too much to keep late hours. I consented, but was actually kept by him till seven in the morning. His carriage had been waiting at the door all the time, and he then offered to carry me home to Hatton Garden; I however declined the offer.

He was very desirous that I should introduce him to my friend William Gifford, whom he highly respected, not only for his learning and poetical

talents, but as the shrewdest and most intelligent of all the editors of dramatic authors. I settled an evening with Mr. Gifford, and went with Mr. Kemble at the time appointed. They had all the talk to themselves, and seemed to be highly gratified with each other. Mr. Kemble offered him the free use of his library, if he thought it would assist him in his illustration of Ben Jonson, whose works Mr. Gifford was then preparing for publication. Mr. Gifford availed himself of this offer, and all the books he wanted were immediately sent to him, and were carefully returned.

Mr. Gifford afterwards expressed much regret that a line unfavourable to Mr. Kemble had appeared in his poem of "The Baviad," but said that as a new edition of that poem was preparing for the press, he would take care to expunge the offensive passage. He did so, yet when I suggested to him that it would be proper to expunge another passage in the same poem, unfavourable to my friend Mr. Jerningham, he said that the copy-right not being his own, he could not presume to gut a work that belonged to another. Gifford kept up an amicable intercourse with Kemble so long as the former lived, and spoke of his death with sincere regret.

MR. HULL the actor. With this actor I was very intimate, and held him in great respect. He was deservedly esteemed by the whole of the theatrical community. He was in the medical profession before he adopted that of an actor, but in what rank I never knew. He was generally styled Doctor by the performers. As he had a strong lisp, it is strange he should have ventured on the stage; but he probably depended on his good sense and

knowledge. He was an actor of great judgment and feeling, and his merit in Friar Lawrence was universally acknowledged; and in this character his lisp was even an advantage. He was a man of learning, and possessed literary talents. He wrote a tragedy entitled "Fair Rosamond," published two volumes of poems by subscription, and I had the pleasure of being one of his subscribers. He also published "Letters" to a lady who had been his pupil, and whom he afterwards married. This lady appeared upon the stage in the character of Paulina in "The Winter's Tale." At the time I knew them, they were advanced into the "vale of years," and were a perfect Darby and Joan. She often came behind the scenes, to admire and animate her husband, long after she had left the stage. It was gratifying to observe the attention which they paid to each other at their advanced period of life. This attention was often a subject of mirth to the lively actors, but was always respected by those of a graver kind, because it was evidently the effect of long and rooted attachment.

I remember one night seeing them both behind the scenes, when they came merely from curiosity, as Hull did not act on that occasion. He was just going to take a pinch of snuff, when she said, "Try mine, my dear." "I will, my love," he replied, and in his manner displayed the endearment of a youthful lover. Yet there was nothing ludicrous in the gallantry of this aged pair. The actors of his own rank, in his time, were obviously so much below him in knowledge and understanding, that he rated himself somewhat high, but not proudly, in comparison with them.

I never saw Mrs. Hull act, nor know what characters she performed besides Paulina, but it was said that on one occasion, at the end of the performance, he came to her, and said — “ My dear, you played like an angel to-night ;” and then, turning a little aside, said to himself — “ and for that matter so did I, too.” On the publication of his poems, I wrote a few stanzas in praise of them, and sent the manuscript to his wife, and afterwards introduced them into a newspaper. From respect to his memory, I have since inserted them in my volumes. Soon after the lady received my verses, she called on me to express her gratitude, and told me that she had copied them fifteen times, to present them to ladies who were friends of her husband.

Mr. Hull was for a few years the stage-manager of Covent Garden Theatre, and in that capacity, as well as for his good sense, was always required to address the audience when any thing particular had occurred. A ludicrous circumstance happened during the time that mobs paraded the streets at night when Admiral Keppel had been acquitted of the charges brought against him by Sir Hugh Palliser. Mr. Hull lived in a corner of Martlett’s Court, Bow Street, at the time. One of these mobs came before his door, and called for beer. He ordered his servant to supply them, till a barrel which he happened to have in his house was exhausted ; and soon after, another mob came with the same demand, and did not depart without doing mischief. A third mob came, and clamorously demanded the same refreshment. Mr. Hull then addressed them, with theatrical formality, in the following terms : “ Ladies and Gentlemen, one of my barrels has been drunk out,

and one has been let out ; there are no more in the house, and therefore we hope for your usual indulgence on these occasions."

Mr. Hull deserves the perpetual gratitude of the theatrical community, as he was the original founder of that benevolent institution, "The Theatrical Fund," which secures a provision for the aged and infirm of either sex, who are no longer capable of appearing with propriety before the public. That he was really the founder, admits of no dispute ; and therefore, as I have attended many anniversary dinners in honour of the institution, I have been astonished that no tribute to his memory has been ever offered on the occasion.

Mr. Hull survived his wife some years. He appointed Mrs. Richards, the wife of Mr. Richards, an eminent scene-painter to Covent Garden Theatre, as his executrix ; and at her desire, as well as from respect to the memory of Mr. Hull, I wrote the following lines on his death.

EPITAPH

On the late Thomas Hull, Esq. founder of the Theatrical Fund.

Hull, long respected in the scenic art,
On life's great stage sustain'd a virtuous part ;
And some memorial of his zeal to show
For his lov'd art, and shelter age from woe,
He form'd that noble Fund which guards his name,
Embalm'd by Gratitude — enshrin'd by Fame.

This epitaph is inscribed on his tomb-stone in the Abbey churchyard, Westminster. He held in the greatest esteem his friend Shenstone the poet, to whose memory he dedicated his tragedy.

Mr. Hull was the author of several Oratorios, founded on scriptural subjects, which were adapted

to music, and performed at the theatres. Mrs. Richards kindly presented to me some observations on "Paradise Lost," which Mr. Hull received from Shenstone's niece: they are in the poet's handwriting, and were written in the twenty-first year of his age, probably while he was at Pembroke College, Oxford. What is somewhat odd, he concludes with the following words:

Milton had no ear, that's poz.

This little tract is now in my possession: the handwriting resembles that of Pope. It is my opinion, and was the opinion of Dr. Wolcot, that if Shenstone had written nothing but "The Schoolmistress," he would have been entitled to a high rank among the British poets.

MR. WILLIAM SMITH. This gentleman, who was generally distinguished by the appellation of "Gentleman Smith," I had not the pleasure of knowing till many years after he had retired from the stage. I had been applied to by Mr. Hill, a gentleman well known in the literary circles of the metropolis, who was then the proprietor of a respectable literary and theatrical repository, entitled "The Monthly Mirror," now no longer in existence, to procure a biographical sketch of Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith I had been accustomed to see perform in my early days, and was a warm admirer of his acting. I had been present when he took leave of the stage, and was in a private box at Drury Lane Theatre with Madame Mara.

On entering the stage, to deliver his farewell to the audience, he was received with a universal burst of applause, which was repeated, and continued for several minutes. His address was brief but empha-

tic, and delivered with a manly dignity, and fervid expression of gratitude that powerfully operated on the audience. At one time the applause was so great, that I thought it was likely to subdue his firmness ; but he paused for a moment, and then resumed his speech with all the manly buoyancy of his character.

The substance of his address was to say, that he was fully impressed with a sense of the kindness which he had so long experienced from the public, and to assure the audience, that though many might be more worthy of their favour, none could exceed him in zeal in their service. Madame Mara was deeply affected by this speech, and I heartily sympathized in her emotions.

Many years after he retired from the stage, he was induced to quit his retreat at St. Edmund's Bury, and to revisit London for the purpose of performing Charles in "The School for Scandal," for the benefit of his old friend King. I passed him in the street a day or two before the performance took place, and could but feel pleasure in seeing how little his person had been altered by time. There was the same easy and manly gait, though less of that spirited and careless buoyancy, which had marked his earlier years. He seemed to walk with a kind of philosophic indifference to the things around him, and in so unaffected a manner, that he probably passed unnoticed by those who did not know his person, except from his gentlemanly appearance. There was something in his manner, and in the intelligence in his face, which induced me, even on this casual glance, to regret that I had not the pleasure of being acquainted with him.

It was impossible for me to miss his performance, and I joined with my friend the celebrated Mrs. Robinson in taking a box sufficient for herself, her daughter, one of her female friends, and myself, in the lower range of boxes level with the pit. I shall not attempt to describe the tumultuous reception which he experienced from as large an audience as it was possible for the theatre to contain, when the curtain was withdrawn and presented him at the convivial table. It was repeatedly renewed, and he came forward and bowed to the audience. Never, perhaps, on any occasion, did an individual in any station receive more hearty demonstrations of public esteem and approbation. It is sufficient to add, that there was no abatement of his spirit and humour in his performance of the character, or of his corporeal activity.

In the last scene of the play, when Lady Teazle happened to drop her fan, there was a race among the male performers to pick it up and present it to her, but Mr. Smith got the start of them all, and delivered it to her with such unaffected ease and elegance, that the audience were struck with the incident, and strongly expressed their applause.

This fine display of comic genius, which confirmed the impressions that his acting made upon me in my early days, induced me to write an account of it the same night for a daily newspaper entitled "The True Briton," of which I was then a proprietor; and Mr. Smith was so well satisfied with it, that he sent his thanks to the editor, declaring that he thought it one of "the brightest eulogiums he had received during his theatrical career," and added a copy of the verses written by himself, and which he

had delivered at the end of the play. The original letter, after his death, I presented to his amiable widow, who is still living, I hope, in good health at Bury St. Edmund's, with her venerable sisters.

I took a copy of this letter for the gratification of my own pride, but it was unluckily lost upon the sudden and unexpected removal of my papers from the Sun Office in the Strand.

To resume the subject of his biography. Urged by Mr. Hill, and encouraged by Mr. Powell of Drury Lane Theatre, who had been patronised by Mr. Smith and recommended by him to that theatre, I ventured to apply to Mr. Smith for a sketch of his public life, and endeavoured to excuse the liberty by acknowledging myself the author of the account of his performance for the benefit of Mr. King, with which he had declared himself to have been so much gratified. I received a very kind answer, in which he promised to give me the sketch I had requested. In a day or two after I received a brief account of his education, his residence at Cambridge University, and the general course of his theatrical life. The very next day, however, I received a letter from him, earnestly entreating me to send his manuscript back by return of post, alleging that on reflection he could not be guilty of the vanity of supposing that any of his professional or private concerns could possibly be worthy of record, and interesting to the world at large. I therefore contented myself with reading the manuscript, which was well and modestly written, and returned it by post the same day, though not without reluctance, as it would really have been a very interesting memoir

of a gentleman, a scholar, and an actor, who was long and deservedly a favourite with the public.

But though my application to Mr. Smith for some memorial of his professional life was unsuccessful, it was productive of a correspondence which lasted some years; and I have between twenty and thirty letters from him, all written with the spirit which animated his public and private character. They also manifest his critical judgment, candour, and taste, as well as his classical attainments. There does not appear the least trace of envy towards any of the actors who were his contemporaries, but on the contrary a liberal tribute to their professional merit, particularly to Mr. Garrick, of whom he takes every opportunity of speaking with enthusiasm,—though he is so candid in expressing his opinion of Barry as to say, that in some scenes he was equal to Garrick, and in love scenes even superior to him.

Mr. Smith must be considered as a competent judge, and he was also an excellent actor. In one of his letters he says, that Mr. Garrick was so perfect in every character he represented as to be wholly absorbed in the assumption of it.

In another of his letters he says, “Garrick, with all natural graces and perfections, must ever in my now decaying judgment stand alone—‘The front of Jove himself.’ Among the chief blessings of my life I ever held the greatest to be that I was bred at Eton, and born in the days of Garrick.” Such is the opinion of an actor who was a kind of competitor of Garrick; and such was the opinion of all the most judicious men with whom I ever was

acquainted, who were deeply conversant with human nature and the stage.

Mr. Smith's repugnance to all biographical records, and even to all posthumous memorials, increased with age and his farther experience of the vanity of life, for he exacted a promise from his amiable lady that nothing of the kind should be published on his decease; and he was buried with so little pomp and ceremony, that there is no stone or any other indication to mark the spot where his remains are interred.

My late friend Jessé Foot, in his *Life of Arthur Murphy*, thus relates the opinion of the latter. "Whenever he spoke of Mr. Smith's merits as an actor, he never failed to add, that he was not only a gentleman himself, but always gave a gentlemanly character to his profession." Mr. Smith was a constant frequenter of Newmarket course, from his early life, and almost to the close of his very advanced age. He had formed high connexions at college, and added to them considerably at Newmarket. I never heard that he engaged in betting, and conclude that he went chiefly to enjoy the sport, and to meet those noble friends whom he retained through life.

Among his earliest and firmest friends was the late Sir George Beaumont, a gentleman of whose merits and accomplishments it is difficult for panegyric to exaggerate. This excellent baronet was not only a sound critic on the fine arts, but also an admirable artist. He was sometime a pupil of Wilson, the celebrated landscape painter, and purchased many of his best works, some of which he liberally presented to the National Gallery. Sir

George retained his attachment to Mr. Smith till the close of his life; and a few years before his death engaged Mr. Jackson, the royal academican, to take a journey to Bury in order to paint a portrait of him when he was turned of eighty years of age. Sir George had a portrait of him painted at the age of forty. A print from the last portrait by Jackson was well executed, and much valued by his friends. It expressed an intelligent and discerning spirit, that time could not subdue.

On Mr. Smith's last visit to the metropolis, he resided at the hotel in King Street, Covent Garden. In a day or two after he arrived, he sent a note to me, telling me that, if I could call on him at eleven the following morning, we might chat for half an hour, but not more, as he expected Sir George Beaumont to call and take him in his carriage to see some of his old friends, particularly Lord Mulgrave and General Phipps. I was on the point of going to him, when he came to the Sun Office, on foot, for fear, as he said, that some mistake had arisen; and for about a quarter of an hour conversed with us, and displayed all his original animation. I regret that I was prevented from calling on him at the hotel, for then I should probably have been introduced to Mrs. Smith, whom I have never seen, as they were too much engaged in a round of visits for me to have a chance of another interview.

In the evening of that day I met him again in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre, still under the zealous convoy of Sir George Beaumont, who seemed to be delighted to see the respect which the veteran received from the performers, who thronged round

him, and were all emulous to testify their esteem and veneration.

On his return to Bury, he resumed his correspondence with me, and corresponded with me till a very short time before his decease; even his very last letters were characterised by his usual vivacity and vigour. His attachment to Newmarket began early, and he visited the course till his bodily strength was nearly exhausted, and he could go no longer. It is understood that in his engagements with the London manager, he always reserved a right to visit Newmarket at the usual seasons, probably with a proportionable reduction of his salary.

Sir George Beaumont told me that Mr. Smith prided himself on never having, during the whole of his theatrical life, blacked his face or descended through a trap-door. Of course he never performed *Othello*, *Oroonoko*, or *Zanga*, though he would doubtless have rendered ample justice to those characters. Churchill says of him—

Smith, the genteel, the airy and the smart,
Smith has just gone to school to say his part;

from which it may be inferred that the poet thought he chiefly excelled in comedy, and the epithets which the bard has applied to him, prove that in his opinion he performed his comic parts with all requisite ease and gaiety. Indeed, to Ross, who was his contemporary for a long period at Covent Garden Theatre, the chief characters in tragedy were assigned; and Ross, though so sprightly in private life, was too heavy, and sometimes too sluggish for the comic muse.

As the reader may probably be gratified in seeing

a specimen of his poetical powers, I shall insert the following lines, which I received in one of his letters, but not till I had repeatedly requested something of that description.

LINES

*Written after passing the evening with a friend in
the Temple, 1780.*

Last night as with my friend I sate,
Methought I cared no more for fate
Than fate might care for me ;
In gaiety and easy chat,
We smiled at *this* and laugh'd at *that*
With hearts brim full of glee.

Cheerly the minutes danced away,
Till twilight oped the dawn of day,
Yet free from care's dull power ;
We heeded not the watchman's knock,
Nor ask'd our spirits what's o'clock,
Nor mark'd the vulgar hour.

But Prudence whisper'd we must part,
Though bright each eye, alive each heart,
For all was well *within* ;
Yet parting check'd our present bliss,
We both shook hands and join'd in this,
That *daylight* proved a *sin*.*

* Comus.

“So,” adds he in his letter, “the withered yellow leaf is dropping from the bough, and leaves no trace behind.”

I received from him also a translation of an ode of Horace, and also of a passage in Juvenal, which fully evinced his taste and scholarship, but I thought an original effusion of his pen would be more acceptable. I sincerely regret that I did not know him at an early period, as I am convinced his manly

spirit and philosophic indifference to the ordinary cares of life, would have corrected a despondency to which I have always been subject, though I have constantly prevented it from appearing in company.

Before Smith's retirement from the stage, a number of gentlemen, friends of his and admirers of the drama, who formed what was styled "The Phoenix Club," of which he was a member, presented to him an elegant and valuable cup, which he found at his house on his return from the theatre, with the following inscription:—

TO WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
On his retirement from the stage.
They knew him well, Horatio.

Feeling the highest veneration for the memory of Garrick, in which I am supported by the testimony of Mr. Const and other friends, who had more opportunities of judging of his merit, particularly Sir George Beaumont, who was a good actor himself, I shall cite a few passages from the letters of Mr. Smith. "We may safely rate Garrick," he says, "as

Omnium Histrionum facile princeps,

and in my humble opinion this was the least part of his excellence. As a man I admired, loved, and honoured him—his merits were great, his benevolence and generosity, though by some disputed, were, to *my certain knowledge*, diffusive and abundant. In bargains, perhaps, he was keen, but punctual. *Fiat justitia!*"

"As to Garrick, my utmost ambition as an actor was to be thought worthy to hold up his train."

"Of Garrick and Barry, where *love* was the burthen or rather support of the scene, Barry was at

least equal to Roscius. Romeo, Castalio, Othello, Varaves, and Jaffier, were *his own*. In the more commanding passions, where the brain forced its workings through the magic powers of the eye, Mr. Garrick was beyond comparison in *every thing*; but Barry *next* to him. Allowing each his merit, I have thought for nearly seventy years, all that were eminent were plants of Garrick's rearing under his own fostering hand in his own garden, and Nature the designer. My embers will a little warm when I think of his departed spirit."

"Of Mr. Garrick, whom I first saw and admired at Goodman's Fields, in the year 1740, I can never speak but with idolatry, and have ever looked upon it as one great blessing in my life to have lived in the days of Garrick."

I could quote many more passages from Mr. Smith's letters, in which he expresses his enthusiastic admiration of Garrick, but as they have all the same tenour and substance, it is needless to add to the subject.

As far as I can recollect, Mr. Smith was principally distinguished for his Hamlet, Richard, and Macbeth, in tragedy; and Volpone, Captain Plume, and Archer, in comedy. I remember I was particularly struck with the difference in the demeanour of Mr. Smith, and "Honest Tom King," when the latter, just before the dropping of the curtain, advanced in the sight of the audience, and with both his hands extended to shake those of Smith, as if to thank him for his kindness in quitting his retreat, after a long absence, to perform for the benefit of an old friend, whose declining fortunes rendered such an exertion necessary. King's action on this occasion manifested, amidst all the warmth of gratitude, the formality of

Sir Peter Teazle, while that of Smith exhibited the easy freedom and generosity of Charles Surface, who seemed to receive all such testimonies as an intrusion upon the liberal gaiety of his natural disposition.

I have dwelt the longer upon the subject of Mr. Smith, because I consider him as an extraordinary individual. With a character of singular animation, and in his early days, while at Cambridge University, distinguished by the designation of the "Young Buck of the College," ready for any spirited enterprise, he was an attentive student, and became an excellent scholar. Though, at the time he entered upon the stage, he assumed a profession that was by no means held in such respect as it has since acquired, yet he retained all his college connexions, which consisted of some of the chief nobility of the country.

It appears to me that he could not have been thrown into any situation in life in which he would not have acquitted himself with honour. It never was my good fortune to sit with him at the same table in company, but I can readily conceive that conversation must have derived its chief spring and stimulus from the buoyancy of his spirit. He was always affable to his inferiors in the theatre, but at the same time so guarded in manner, that he was treated with cautious respect.

His many letters to me display the same animated character, and are generally seasoned with classical quotations, which, till his eighty-ninth year, proved that his love and taste for literature continued to be one of his unabated attachments. Though I never had the pleasure of being personally introduced to Mrs. Smith, I have nevertheless received several

letters from her since the death of her husband, all of which are marked by good sense, amiable feeling, conjugal affection, and the regret naturally attending so melancholy a deprivation.

CHAPTER VI.

GIBSON and RIDOUT. These actors many years ago were proprietors of the Liverpool Theatre. They had previously appeared on the London stage, but without any professional distinction; yet they rose to such a high reputation on the Liverpool boards, that they were deemed in Liverpool above all competition. The good people of Liverpool are, however, so much improved in theatrical taste and judgment, that they are not now likely to be gratified except by first-rate abilities.

To prove the high estimation in which Gibson and Ridout were held by the better people of Liverpool, on some subject of importance to the commercial interests of that place, when several of the principal merchants were quitting the town, in order to attend the House of Commons, as they were setting off for that purpose, even at the door of the coach, they were entreated to go, as soon as they reached London, and see Garrick perform, that they might know whether he was equal to Gibson and Ridout. The deputies from the town, therefore, as soon as their parliamentary business was settled, went to see Garrick. The result of their embassy was, of course,

communicated to the town before their return, and they arrived at Liverpool a few days after. Several of their friends had waited their arrival, and as soon as the coach-door was opened, the first question addressed to the travellers was, "Well, is Garrick equal to Gibson and Ridout?" The answer was, "Oh! by no means; Garrick would be nothing in Liverpool, compared with Gibson and Ridout." Such, at that time, was the standard of theatrical taste at Liverpool, which now, perhaps, may rank with any provincial town, if not with the metropolis itself, in a due estimation of theatrical talents.

Ridout had quitted the London stage long before my time, but of Gibson's person I have a faint recollection, as he was some years stationary at Covent Garden Theatre, and was generally styled King Gibson, because he performed Cymbeline, and other heavy old monarchs and courtiers. His person was bulky, and there was a ponderous sort of nature in his acting which would by no means suit the taste of the present times. He was a prudent and good-natured man, and the following anecdote is cited as a proof of the kindness of his disposition.

The inferior actors at that period were careless and dissipated, and as soon as the business of the night was over, they generally spent the remainder of it at low public-houses, which were much frequented in consequence of their being the resort of the theatrical fraternity. A young man who had recently been engaged at Covent Garden Theatre, had come from some provincial company, and was hardly known to any of the London actors, conducted himself with such modest diffidence, that he attracted the notice of the veteran Gibson, who one

day after rehearsal took him aside, and addressed him to the following purpose: "Young man, I have observed your modest demeanour, and I see with some satisfaction that you are not intimate with the actors; let me advise you, as an old man well acquainted with life, to avoid public-houses. When you are no longer required at the theatre, go home, study any part that may be assigned to you, take a glass of small-beer to refresh yourself before you go to bed, and if it happens to be the king's birth-day, the news of a great victory, or any occasion of national joy has occurred, put a little nutmeg and sugar in it."

I think I was indebted for this ludicrous story to the late Mr. John Kemble. It is by all accounts characteristic of the economical wisdom of King Gibson. Since the time of the Liverpool managers above mentioned, the Liverpool stage has been in the hands of many eminent performers, the last of whom was the late excellent comic actor Mr. Lewis. His son now possesses it, and conducts it with such judgment and propriety, as fully to maintain the reputation which it had acquired under the management of his estimable father.

Stephen Kemble, who was an accurate observer of human life, and an able delineator of character and manners, was so intelligent and humorous a companion, that he was received with respect into the best company in the several provincial towns, which he occasionally visited in the exercise of his profession. This favourable reception is the more honourable to his character and conduct, because the theatrical tribe are held in very little respect in the provinces. The following instance, while it is a

proof of the respect in which he was held, is a proof also of the indifference, bordering on contempt, with which country actors are treated.

He once told me, that while he was walking in a town in Ireland with the mayor, who *honoured* him with his arm, one of the inferior actors bowed to the magistrate with the most obsequious humility, but did not attract any notice. The man then ran before them, and at another convenient spot repeated his humiliating obeisance. Still, however, he was passed without observation. Again he ran to a place where he thought he was more likely to draw attention, but was equally unsuccessful. Anxious to testify his respect for the mayor, he tried again at another convenient point, manifesting, if possible, a more obsequious courtesy. At length the obduracy of the mayor softened, though not subdued in pride; he turned his head to look at the persevering actor, but without even a nod of recognition, and hastily uttered, "I see you, I see you," which the poor actor considered as an act of gracious condescension.

MR. WALKER, the author of "The Pronouncing Dictionary," and other useful and valuable works, I knew and held in great esteem for his talents, attainments, and moral worth. He was a firm, I had almost said a bigoted Roman Catholic, but, as religion operated more upon his conduct than upon his opinions, he ought to be exempted from such an epithet. He had been an actor in the earlier part of his life, but not rising to any distinction, he quitted the stage, became a teacher of elocution, in which he was very successful, and, with his various publications, was enabled to live very respectably, and at his death to leave property to the amount of

about 5000*l*. He was a tall man, and the print prefixed to his dictionary is a strong likeness.

I once asked him why he left the stage, and he modestly answered that it was because he was conscious he could never attain an eminent station. I told him I had heard he was famous for his performance of Downright. "Ah! sir," said he, "the public were too kind to me in that respect, but I think time and experience would enable me to perform it much better." He spoke of Garrick with warm admiration, and was stored with anecdotes of the old performers of his time, which he related with precision, if not with much humour.

My late friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, assured me, that Walker was not a Latin scholar; but his dictionary is so elaborate, displays such unwearied research, and is marked by such apparently learned illustrations, that I am persuaded he must have been mistaken. Mr. Walker's wife was an actress, highly respected for her comic talents, and I was informed by those who knew her well, that besides being a very respectable woman, her intelligence and humour in private life rendered her a very instructive and agreeable companion.

Mr. Walker was highly esteemed by the late Mr. John Kemble, by whom I was first introduced to him, and Mr. Walker estimated no less the character of Mr. Kemble.

QUIN the actor. He was a remarkable instance of elevation from a low station in the London theatre to the highest rank in his profession, before the appearance of Garrick. I remember to have seen his name among the *Dramatis Personæ* in Colley Cibber's alteration of Shakspeare's Richard the Third,

where he was rated for the part of Lieutenant of the Tower. His first start into notice was when he was announced to attempt the part of Cato, on the death of Booth, the celebrated representative of the character. Yet I was assured by Mr. Ross, that Quin at last acquired such an ascendancy over the audience, that he took great liberties with them ; and on one occasion, when he was performing the part of Zanga, and a drunken man disturbed the pit, he came forward, and said : “ Turn that fellow out, or by G— I won’t go on.” The man was accordingly turned out, and Quin resumed his part.

Mr. Donaldson, who had seen him perform, told me, that nothing could be more ludicrous than when Quin and Mrs. Pritchard, two persons in advanced life, and of very bulky forms, performed the characters of Chamont and Monimia. Quin’s declaration,

Two unhappy orphans, alas ! we are,

though nothing could be more ludicrous, excited no feelings of ridicule, both were such good performers, and such favourites with the public. Mr. Donaldson further told me there was so much dignity in the person of Quin, that if a foreigner had seen him in the Drawing-room at Court, he would have taken him for the prime minister.

Quin was, at first, hostile to Garrick, but at length acknowledged his extraordinary genius, which old Cibber never would. As is well known, he was proud of making every body in company insensibly drunk. On one occasion there was a parson in company, who, as he had been told, was more than a match for the hardest bacchanalian ; Quin was therefore ambitious of conquering the parson. All the company

were soon overcome with wine, and lay senseless on the floor ; Quin was as senseless as the rest, for he had fallen asleep, but still retained his seat. When he waked, he looked with triumph on his prostrate companions, and was anxious to find the parson among them, but in vain ; he therefore concluded that the poor man had been taken ill and carried to bed. “ But,” said Quin, “ it was a fine summer morning, and, to my extreme mortification, I saw the parson, through the window, bathing his head before a pump, and a shining steam arising from it, like a glory over the head of an apostle.”

A gentleman of Bath, very little and very dull, was extremely fond of being with Quin, and once, when the latter was going to ride in a carriage, begged to accompany him. “ No,” said Quin, “ you are too dull.” But as the little gentleman was importunate — “ Well,” said Quin, “ get in, for if any accident happens you will serve as a *linch-pin*.”

Quin was accustomed to attend Epsom races, and the landlady of one of the inns, who held him in the highest esteem, always took care to secure a bed for him. On one occasion, however, at a very busy season, she forgot him ; and being unable to procure a bed for him in the town, she asked if he would be content to share a bed with a clergyman who had kindly offered him that accommodation. “ Well, Dame,” said Quin, “ I’ll lie in the same bed with the parson, if you’ll promise that he will not give me the itch.” Quin entered the bed first, and observing, as the parson followed him, that his shirt was dirty, he exclaimed : “ What ! Parson, are you coming to bed in your *cassock* ?”

Quin was not fond of the clergy, whom he gene-

rally stigmatized as hypocrites. Happening one day to dine at the house of a clergyman at Bath, where all the rest of the company were of the same profession, the master of the house apologized for not having the dinner ready in due time, alleging that his old turnspit had thought proper to absent himself, and he had been obliged to have persons that ill supplied his place. The conversation after dinner chiefly related to the value of certain livings, and as to what the several incumbents paid their curates; till at length Quin was tired, and signified that he would take his evening walk. As he was leaving the passage, the old turnspit returned from his excursion, hanging his head, and creeping in as if conscious of guilt. Quin, as he passed, gave him a slight blow on the head, saying—"Ah! damn you, what, you must keep a curate too!"

Dining one day at a public ordinary, where was a sort of struggle to get at the dishes, Quin said: "Gentlemen, if ever I dine at an ordinary again, I will have basket-handled knives."

On a similar occasion, when one of the company had helped himself to a very large piece of bread, Quin stretched out his hand to take hold of it. The person to whom it belonged prevented him, saying, "Sir, that is my bread." "I beg your pardon," said Quin, "I took it for the loaf."

Another time, at dinner, a gentleman had taken upon his plate a large quantity of pudding, and said: "Mr. Quin, let me recommend this pudding to you." "With all my heart," said Quin, looking at the gentleman's plate, and then at the dish, "but which is the pudding?" This anecdote I heard from Mr. Sheridan.

Quin, in order to give weight to particular passages, was apt to pause too long. When he once performed Horatio in "The Fair Penitent," and was challenged by Lothario to meet him the following morning, "A mile among the rocks," Quin paused so long before he said, "I'll meet thee there," that a man in the Gallery bawled out,—"Why don't you give the gentleman an answer, whether you will or no."

Quin was once annoyed by a very effeminate coxcomb in a coffee-room at Bath, who looked at him steadily, and observing that Quin frowned on him, he asked the waiter, in a whisper—"Who is that *man*?" Quin, who heard him, roared out to the waiter—"Who is that *thing*?" "Sir Edward S——'s *son*," said the waiter. "You lie, you dog," said Quin, "*it is his daughter.*"

Theophilus Cibber once vehemently attacked Quin in a coffee-room, accusing him of having said that he knew him when he had not any shirts to his back. "I beg your pardon, Sir," said he, "you have been misinformed:" and when Cibber thought he ought to be satisfied with the denial, Quin added: "I said I knew you when you had not *a shirt* to your back."

Theophilus Cibber was by no means wanting in abilities or humour. He had ill-formed legs, and having projected one of them in company, which was noticed with a laugh, he offered to lay a wager that there was a worse in company; and it being accepted, he put forward his other leg, which was indeed more ill-shaped than the other.

Quin was once invited by Mrs. Clive to stay a few days with her at Strawberry Hill. Having walked round her garden, she asked him if he had seen her

pond, a small piece of water. "Yes, Kate," said he, "I have seen your *basin*, but did not see a washball."

It is a common practice with affectionate mothers to have their children brought down after dinner, that they may show their talents to the company. On an occasion of this kind, when Quin had been annoyed by the spouting of Master Jacky and the singing of Miss Anna Maria, he was heard to grumble to himself: "Oh, the injured memory of Herod!"

When determined to pay a visit to Plymouth for the chief purpose of eating John Dory, a friend wrote to the landlord of the principal inn, desiring to show all possible attention to Mr. Quin, to procure him the best claret, and to promote his comfort by all the means in his power. The landlord, proud of his guest, soon after Quin's arrival offered him the use of his horse, to procure a good appetite. Quin accepted the offer; but as the horse was a very hard trotter, when the landlord asked him if he would have him next day—"No, landlord," said he, "when I want my bottom kicked again, I will hire a porter."

Mrs. Hallam, the aunt of the late Mrs. Mattocks, was an actress at Covent Garden Theatre during the time of Quin. At this period a pantomime was then at the height of its popularity, and one of the most successful sights was Harlequin jumping through a cask. Mrs. Hallam was a very large woman. As the cask was in requisition every night, it remained behind the scenes; and Quin happening to stumble against it, exclaimed: "Why don't you take away Mrs. Hallam's *stays*."

I had this story from Mrs. Mattocks, who said her aunt told her that she had been a good actress in her day; but, said Mrs. M. I had no other autho-

city. When Quin was once delivering the speech of Jaques in "As you like it," describing the Seven Ages, an effeminate man, who performed Amicus, regardless of the speech, sat upon the very edge of the bench in the banquet scene, and overturned it, falling himself on the ground. Quin, turning indignantly on the prostrate coxcomb, exclaimed: "Damn it, *Madam*, can't you *sit* on your *side-saddle*." I derived this anecdote also from Mrs. Mattocks, who was a good actress and a sprightly woman.

The husband of Mrs. Clive was a barrister, a very learned and intelligent man, by all accounts, but without practice in his profession; he was therefore invited to become the domestic companion of Mr. Ince, a gentleman of fortune, and reputed to be the Templar in the club of the Spectator. Mr. Ince was well known to be a frequent contributor to that admirable periodical work. My old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck of the British Museum, knew Mr. Ince, and told me that he retained the practice, as mentioned in the Spectator, of visiting the play-house almost every evening, as long as his health and age would admit.

It seems strange that Horace Walpole, a man of learning and elegant taste, should have been so much attached to Mrs. Clive, whose manners were rough and vulgar; particularly as after her death he transferred his partiality to one of the accomplished Miss Berrys, and offered to marry her, that he might leave her a fortune and a title. Mrs. Clive's person exempted her from temptation, and her character was unimpeached; but though she was well acquainted with the world, it is hardly to be supposed that she could be adequately supplied with conver-

sation for such a scholar, and man of taste, as Horace Walpole. On her death, he wrote a poetical epitaph upon her, in which he said that Comedy died with Clive. In consequence of this panegyric, Dr. Wolcot wrote the following lines, which are not in his printed works.

Horace, of Strawberry Hill I mean, not Rome,

Lo! all thy geese are swans, I do presume;

Truth and thy verses seem not to agree:

Know, Comedy is hearty, all alive;

The Comic Muse no more expired with Clive

Than dame Humility will die with thee.

My late worthy old friend, Mr. George Nicol of Pall Mall, told me, that while he was on a visit to Horace Walpole, soon after Mr. Gifford's Baviad was published, Walpole, then Lord Orford, said, it was "quite refreshing to find such a work amidst all the sickening trash which was pouring upon the world under the name of poetry."

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. SIDDONS. It might well be thought strange, if, after having begun with noticing Garrick, in my observations on theatrical performers, I should omit so great an actress as Mrs. Siddons. He was certainly the greatest actor, in my opinion, that I have ever seen ; and Mrs. Siddons the greatest tragic actress. But her merits are so well known, and so widely and justly admired, that it would be a sort of presumption in me to attempt to add to the fame which she has so deservedly acquired.

Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Crawford, when the latter was Mrs. Barry, were the greatest female ornaments of the stage that I had ever witnessed previously to the appearance of Mrs. Siddons ; and I feel disposed to say no more than that she possessed all the dignity of the former and all the tenderness of the latter. Mrs. Barry, indeed, was also a comic actress of no ordinary powers, and her performance of Rosalind, in "As you like it," was in my humble estimation one of the most perfect personations ever exhibited on the stage.

Mrs. Siddons seems to me to have been born for tragedy. I have seen her in Rosalind, and though nothing could be more correct than her conception of the character, or more graceful and dignified where the princess is to appear, yet in the lighter scenes of the part it was impossible for her to throw off that pensive disposition which seemed to pervade

her nature. I have had the pleasure of being intimate with her for many years, and was not only favoured with her friendship, but with her epistolary correspondence during her occasional absence from town, and I retain many of her letters, with which even her request would not induce me to part.

I think I may venture to say, that I studied her character as attentively as she ever did any character which she represented with such superior ability on the stage. Her mind is lofty, and her sentiments are always dignified or tender. She would have been capable of sustaining with appropriate merit in real life any of the highest female characters which she has assumed in her profession. Thus much I say upon ample observation and full conviction; and I consider any contrary opinions that may have prevailed against her, at any time, as the result of malice and envy of her professional excellence, and the reputation and prosperity which have attended it.

I shall now drop a subject to which I cannot do justice, and mention a circumstance that I hope she will excuse me for relating, as it shows the uncertainty of friendship, and the caution which is necessary in forming such a connexion. I called on her one morning, when I found her in the act of burning some letters of her own which had been returned to her by the executor of the gentleman to whom they had been addressed. As I sat nearer to the fire, she handed them to me as she read them in succession to throw into it. As I was going to dispose of one in this manner, a printed paper dropped out of it, which she must have overlooked. I took it up, and found that it consisted of some

verses which had appeared in "The St. James's Chronicle," and which contained some very severe strictures on her character. The name of the subject of this satire was not printed, but appeared in manuscript on the top of the lines in the handwriting of her deceased correspondent. As no real friend of Mrs. Siddons could thus invidiously point out the object, it struck me, as I had heard the departed person was a poet, that he had attacked her at one time for the purpose of insidiously defending her at another. She seemed to be surprised and shocked at this discovery, and I then ventured to ask her if her departed friend had ever, like Stukely in the play, endeavoured to excite her jealousy against Mr. Siddons. After a short pause, she said she remembered he had once hinted to her that Mr. Siddons had a mistress at Chelsea. The mystery then seemed to be revealed, and the design of the writer developed, as Mrs. Siddons was at that time in the fulness of her personal beauty. I left her in a state of consternation, and called on her in the evening, when I found her father and mother, to whom the matter had been communicated; but they testified no surprise, and said they had never liked the man, and thought that he had some wicked purpose in view. This anecdote cannot be uninteresting, as it illustrates human nature, and relates to a distinguished and meritorious individual.

I must here pay a short tribute to the memory of Mr. Siddons, whose character I always held in high respect. He was a handsome, gentlemanly-looking man, with a good understanding and pleasing and affable manners. He also possessed literary talents, and when he was the proprietor of Sadler's Wells he

wrote many humorous songs, which were very popular at that theatre. Mr. Siddons had been overshadowed by the great talents of his wife; but if she had only adorned the domestic circle by her virtues and good sense, he would then have appeared fully upon an equality with such a partner, to all who might have had the pleasure of being acquainted with him. Many cheerful hours I have passed with him and the family. I was for many years in the habit of dining with Mr. John Kemble on Christmas-day, and on old Christmas-day with Mr. Siddons and his family, till his declining health obliged him to retire to Bath. It ought to be mentioned to the honour of his conjugal character, that when a false and malignant insinuation against Mrs. Siddons appeared in one of the public prints, he publicly offered a thousand pounds for the discovery of the anonymous libeller.

Mr. William Gifford was much attached to Mr. Waldron, whom I may properly introduce in this place, as he was an old friend of mine, and a very respectable actor. Mr. Waldron perhaps was only second to Mr. Isaac Reed in knowledge of dramatic productions of the earliest periods. He was a dramatic writer of real talents, and the author of several poems in the style of Milton's "L'Allegro." He had collected many curious particulars respecting the history of the British drama. Mr. Gifford assured me that he had often derived much information from the stores collected by Mr. Waldron, and sincerely regretted his death, not only as a friend, but as a man abounding in valuable knowledge. As Mr. Waldron left two sons, who both are well-educated men, it is surprising that the manuscripts of their

respectable father have not been presented to the world.

I met Mr. Waldron, on the publication of Mr. Gifford's edition of "Ben Jonson," carrying the nine bulky volumes home through the park, so delighted with having had them presented to him by Mr. Gifford, as if he thought they could not be safe in any hands but his own. Mr. Gifford presented them to me at the same time, but, however proud I was of the gift, I ventured to send them home by a deputy.

Mr. Waldron was much respected also by Mr. Kemble. He was very lively and facetious in company, and always good-natured and well-bred. Soon after the commencement of the West India Docks, a party was formed to view the excavations. My late friend ADMIRAL SCHANK, then a Captain, was one of the Commissioners of the Transport Board, and he took us in one of the transport barges.

The late Mr. Penneck of the British Museum, Mr. Kemble, myself, and some friends of Captain Schank, were of the party. We had a plentiful dinner on board the barge, and passed some pleasant hours, after we had further gratified our curiosity with a peep at the arsenal at Woolwich. Before we left the vessel to return home in stages, Mr. Kemble said to me, "I should be glad to invite Captain Schank to dine with me, but I suppose nothing would induce him to sleep out of this vessel;" and he was surprised when I told him that the Captain kept a handsome establishment in Leicester Square, and a carriage.

Here I must pause to pay a tribute of respect to my old and worthy friend Admiral Schank, who was a true British tar, of a hospitable spirit, and manly

sincerity. He was married to a very amiable and intelligent lady, a sister of Sir William Grant, late Master of the Rolls.

Admiral Schank had a high reputation in the navy, and was the inventor of a vessel named the *Woolverine*. For some years before his death he suffered by a gradual loss of sight, and at last became totally blind. He had consulted several surgeons, who told him that his disorder was a commencing cataract, and at length he consulted me. I told him with much regret that his disorder was not a cataract, which admitted of relief, but that I feared it would prove a gutta-serena. He however went to several parts of the kingdom, where persons resided who were reputed to be successful in treating disorders of the eye, but in vain ; and after many a fruitless journey he said, " I wish I had depended on my friend Taylor's opinion at first, for I should then have saved myself from disappointment and the expense of at least three hundred pounds.

Mr. Kemble, as the manager of a theatre, conducted himself with great kindness towards the performers, and never attempted to exert any unfriendly authority. He was always unwilling to deprive an actor of any part that he had been accustomed to perform, or to oblige him to assume, or continue to perform, a character that did not please him.

He was very intimate with Suett the actor, when he first came to London, and they used frequently to ride on horseback together. He deeply lamented the habit of drinking which Suett had acquired by associating with the lower performers. He said that Suett had been a man of refined sentiments, had an

elegant taste, and would have remained so if it had not been for that unfortunate habit. Suett was a man of good sense, with a kind and benevolent disposition.

He had a very high opinion of Mr. Kemble, who had desired him to send his son to him every morning, and he would hear him read. The boy had neglected to go one morning, and Suett, who had a quaint formality in his manner, reproached him for having slighted the instructions of so great a man, and then added, "If you do not attend that great man, I will most certainly withdraw my eye of favour from you."

I attended the funeral of Miss Chapman of Covent Garden Theatre. She was a good actress and a sensible woman. Suett had known her on the York stage, and had a great friendship for her. A little before the mournful cavalcade set out from her apartments in James Street, Covent Garden, Suett came to the house in mourning, and begged that he might be permitted to join in paying the last tribute of friendship to the departed lady. He was admitted into the same coach with me and the other mourners, and showed evident proofs of unaffected grief all the way to the grave.

Suett was capable of performing characters of grave or facetious humour, but his element was broad farce. I once passed an evening with him and the elder Bannister, at the house of my friend George Colman, in Upper Titchfield Street, and saw him carefully home to his lodgings in Martlett's Court, Bow Street, at five in the morning; a matter of some difficulty, as he had sacrificed too freely to

the bottle, and the weather was very bad. But I esteemed the man, and was diverted with his odd humour all the way.

He was much respected by the other performers, most of whom attended his burial in St. Paul's Churchyard. He was originally a chorister in that cathedral, and composed many songs, the words of which were written by himself. Both music and words were marked by taste and feeling. After his funeral, the actors, who are never wanting in waggery, pretended that they heard him say in his coffin, "My dragons, what are you a'ter?" expressions which he was in the habit of using. He would have been in the prime of life, if his health had not been injured by his convivial disposition.

It would be improper to omit here an important incident in the life of Mr. Kemble. After the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre by fire, his friends and the public felt concerned for his loss, as he had embarked the whole of his property in that concern. I was walking in the Strand, when I heard him call me from his carriage. With a tone of exultation he said, "Taylor have you heard what the Duke of Northumberland has done for me?" I answered in the negative. "Why," he said, "a gentleman waited on me by desire of the Duke, to express his Grace's sincere concern for the melancholy event which had occurred, and to signify that, if 10,000*l.* would be of use to me in the present emergency, his grace would order that this sum should be advanced to me. I expressed my gratitude as well as my surprise at so generous an offer would permit me, but desired the gentleman to say that as it never could be in my power to repay his

Grace, I felt myself obliged to decline his noble offer. The gentleman called on me again to repeat the offer, and I then said I must still decline to avail myself of his Grace's kindness ; for that, so far from being able to repay the principal of so large a sum, I did not think it would ever be in my power to discharge even the interest. The gentleman took this message to his Grace, but called on me a third time, to tell me that his Grace made the offer as an act of friendship, and therefore he should never require from me either interest or principal."

Such was precisely the manner in which Mr. Kemble related this magnificent act of the late Duke of Northumberland to me. I waited on Mr. Kemble on the following Sunday morning, and he then related the cause which had operated so generously on the mind of the Duke. He said that Dr. Raine, then Master of the Charter-house, called on him one morning, and expressed his wish that he would give some lessons to a young nobleman on the art of reading, as it was probable the person in question would be a member of Parliament, and Mr. Kemble of course would be liberally rewarded for his trouble. Kemble told the doctor that he had long declined to give instructions of that nature, considering them as wholly useless ; that if the person had good sense and a good ear, he would want no instruction, and if not, that instructions would be ineffectual. The doctor expressed his regret that Kemble had declined the task, observing he came by the desire of the Duke of Northumberland, and that Lord Percy was the intended pupil. " Oh ! " said Kemble, " if it is his Grace's desire, I was so much indebted to him at a

very interesting period of my life, that there is nothing I would not undertake to testify my respect and gratitude." He then readily consented to receive Lord Percy, and give the best instructions in his power. He then related the obligation which he was under to the Duke in the following manner.

"When I was an actor," said he, "in a theatrical company at Doncaster, I had written a tragedy, the hero of which was Belisarius, and as the Duke, then Lord Percy, was quartered there with his regiment, the manager advised me to wait upon his lordship, and request him to suffer some of his men to attend the entrance of Belisarius into Rome. He immediately said, when I told him the purpose of my visit, that he would do anything to show his respect for so great a hero as Belisarius, and that I should have as many men as I wanted to do honour to his triumph. The men accordingly attended, the hero appeared in military grandeur, and the play succeeded, raising me high in the opinion of the manager, at a time when his good opinion was of importance to me. Dr. Raine told the Duke how ready I was to give instructions to Lord Percy, when I knew that it was the desire of his Grace, who, hearing what I had said, signified that he should not forget my ready compliance with his wish. Lord Percy called on me, certainly not twelve times, for such lessons as I could give; and this is the magnificent return," added he, "for my poor services."

It may not be improper to add, that the present Duke seems to partake of his noble father's feelings towards Mr. Kemble, for he was present in the theatre on the night when Mr. Kemble finally took leave of the public, and I afterwards saw his Grace join

him in the green-room, where a confidential conversation took place between them at a distance from the company in general who were present.

Most of the principal performers of both theatres attended on this occasion, to testify their respect for Mr. Kemble, and many of them expressed a desire of possessing some part of his theatre apparel, and what are styled stage properties, as reliques of friendship. He gave his sword to one, his cane to another, and distributed all the articles connected with the character which he had been performing.

On his last visit to this country, he called on me, and I saw an evident appearance of the decline of his health, particularly on his going down stairs, which he appeared to do with difficulty. His brother, Mr. Charles Kemble, kindly invited me to dine with him, that I might see the last of his brother, who was on the eve of returning to Lausanne, and not likely ever to revisit this country. Mr. Kemble took little part in the general conversation, but seemed to be attentive. As he had been accustomed to drink wine, his entire forbearance from it probably injured his health, for I remember dining with him not long before he quitted the stage, and saying, "Come, Johnny, you and I have not had a glass of wine together," and Mrs. Kemble, from the opposite end of the table, said, "I am Johnny, and I'll take a glass with you, for Mr. Kemble does not drink wine."

A friend of mine, who was going to Switzerland, requested that I would give him a letter of introduction to him, and I did so, but on the morning when he was going to present it, he found that Mr. Kemble was no more. The gentleman sent a letter to

me, announcing the melancholy event of his death. I communicated the contents of the letter to the public on the day that it reached me in "The Sun" evening paper, of which I was then proprietor, and gave the original letter to Mr. Charles Kemble.

I have dwelt upon the memory of Mr. Kemble, because I felt a sincere friendship for him, as well as a high respect for his talents, and am convinced that he had a kind and benevolent disposition, and was fully qualified to render himself conspicuous in any province to which he might have devoted his abilities. He was held in the highest regard by his immediate relations, and by all his friends who knew how to appreciate his character.

MR. CHARLES KEMBLE, who now appears to so much advantage on the stage, when he was rather a fine sturdy lad than a young man, held an appointment in a Government office, but being anxious to go upon the stage, he consulted me on the subject. I confess that though he was intelligent, and well-educated, there was such a rustic plainness in his manner, that I did not see any promise of excellence in him, and therefore advised him to keep to his situation, which was a progressive one, from which I told him that in due time he would be able to retire on a comfortable independence. He told me that his brother had expressed the same opinion, and had given him the same advice. Hence it appeared that Mr. Kemble and myself were bad prophets, since his brother Charles has displayed abilities which would have done honour to the stage at any period. It may, however, be said that Mr. Kemble, perhaps, saw his brother's talent with eyes more discerning than mine, and only discouraged his theatrical bent

from a conviction of the difficulty and uncertainty of the profession.

As Mr. Charles Kemble is at present an ornament of the stage, I must speak of him with reserve, lest I might be suspected of the meanness of flattery; but the estimation in which he is held by the public, would fully justify a warm panegyric on his talents. He was very early in life placed for education at a college in Douay, from which he returned with a competent knowledge of the Latin and French languages, and since he has been an established performer in London, he has, I understand, acquired the Italian and German.

As an actor, he is a worthy successor to his brother, particularly in the part of Hamlet; and to say the least of his performance, in a just conception of the author, in animation, variety, and energy, he must satisfy the most rigid critic. His deportment in general is easy and graceful, without affectation, but naturally flowing from his feelings. His Romeo also is an admirable specimen of tragic skill; and in most of his performances in the serious drama, he appears to great advantage. But with all his merit in tragedy, he seems to be more in his element in comic parts. His Charles, in "The School for Scandal," is a performance of great spirit and humour, but perhaps his Young Mirable, in "The Inconstant," is his most perfect personation. His Archer, in the comedy of "The Stratagem," is also highly creditable to his comic powers; and he has shown the versatility of his talents by his performance of Friar Tuck and Falstaff, though so different from his proper caste.

His talents, however, are not confined to acting,

for he has shown literary powers in two dramatic pieces of the serious kind, one entitled "The Point of Honour," founded on a French play; and the other entitled "The Wanderer, or the Rights of Hospitality;" to the last of which I had the pleasure of contributing the prologue. Both of these dramas were successful, and the former is still occasionally brought forward.

It would be strange, indeed, if having noticed the husband I did not mention the wife.

MRS. CHARLES KEMBLE had various and strong pretensions to public favour while she remained upon the stage. She was an excellent comic actress, and a very graceful dancer. She is besides a scientific musician, and altogether a well-educated lady. Her acting was always marked by a thorough knowledge of the character which she assumed, and supported with truth, spirit, and energy. Her Lucy, in "The Beggar's Opera," was as perfect a performance as ever perhaps appeared on the stage. Her knowledge of the French language and French manners enabled her not only to perform French characters with powerful effect, but even to represent them in old age while she was in the meridian of life, which, indeed, she can hardly be said to have now passed. She left the stage without taking a formal leave of it, which has generally been the case with principal performers.

The loss of so deservedly popular an actress must be a subject of regret to the public, for she was too great a favourite ever to incur an unfavourable reception, except during what was called the O. P. riot, which was disgraceful to the public at large, since they suffered a handful of obscure ruffians to inter-

rupt the performances, and injure the theatre for several weeks, by opposing those regulations which were calculated to secure a permanent income to the proprietors, though far below the general measure of their expenses,—to bring persons of high rank to the theatre, to render dramatic novelties more worthy general patronage, and to refine the public taste. Yet, though the proprietors submitted their affairs to the ablest calculators, whose character and judgment were unimpeachable, these rioters were so resolute and so persevering, that they finally effected their purpose.

The insolence which the performers suffered during this shameless storm, and Mrs. Charles Kemble among the rest, might probably operate as one of the causes which induced her to retire from the stage at a time when she was one of its chief comic ornaments.

Mrs. Charles Kemble, like her husband, has displayed her literary powers in an afterpiece, entitled "Personation," in which she appeared in the disguise of an aged French woman, with admirable humour, and in a successful comedy, entitled "Smiles and Tears," to which I had again the pleasure of contributing a prologue.

DODD was an actor whom I knew. He was an admirable representative of the fops in the old comedies, and also of old men. His Sir Andrew, in "Twelfth Night," was a performance of such characteristic merit as to demand the suffrages of critical judgment. He was also a pleasing, though not a professed singer. His Acres, in "The Rivals," Sir Benjamin Backbite, in "The School for Scandal," and Dangle, in "The Critic," were all good speci-

mens of comic humour. He lived with an actress, who came forward in youth with talents and accomplishments, but whose profligate conduct at last wholly deprived her of public favour. During her connexion with Dodd, she ensnared his son, a mere youth, into a similar intercourse, and while this detestable conduct was generally rumoured, she had the confidence to appear upon the stage again, and received strong marks of public disapprobation. She had the hardihood to come forward, and say that the audience had a right to censure her performance, but none to interfere with her private conduct.

She was, however, tolerated again, but her powers were decayed, and when I saw her, her voice was harsh, her manner formal, and she seemed to me to be destitute of spirit and humour. What became of her, or whether she is alive, is hardly known, for she sunk into obscurity.

Dodd was a great collector of old plays, and of the warlike instruments of the American tribes of warriors. He was an agreeable, if not a very intelligent companion, and for his social qualities was generally designated Jemmy Dodd. He had numerous connexions among the higher order of citizens, who always patronised his benefits very liberally. He supported an aged father with filial affection, and gave a good education to his son, who was a respectable member of the church, and has been dead many years.

CHAPTER VIII.

MADAME MARA. I was introduced to this great singer by my late friend Salomon, the celebrated performer on the violin, about the year 1785. I had become acquainted with him some years before. It is well known that in her youth she had been in this country, and supported herself by singing and performing on the guitar. She had been many years abroad, and had cultivated her musical talents with such success, that when she came to London, at the time I was first acquainted with her, she had brought with her the reputation of being the first female singer in Europe. She was immediately engaged for all the great concerts in London, and for the music meetings in the chief country places.

Having in early life acquired the English language, she retained it, and had almost as great a command of it as any native, except that she pronounced some words with a foreign accent. When she first appeared as a singer at Berlin, hearing that she was a native of Germany, Frederick the Great refused to witness her powers, alleging that she was a German, and therefore could not possibly be a good singer. At length, however, he was persuaded to hear her, and when the concert was over he approached her, and asked if she could sing at sight. She answered in the affirmative, on which he took a piece of manuscript music from his pocket, and asked her if she could sing that. She told me that it was the

most difficult piece she had ever met with, but looking over it for a few minutes she told him that she could. "Do then," said the king. She complied, and from that moment his prejudice was at an end, and she became a favourite. Becoming however tired of remaining at Berlin, knowing that her fame had extended to various parts of Europe, where her presence was anxiously desired, and very inviting engagements having been offered her, she asked permission to visit Italy on account of her health. The king, however, would not suffer her to depart.

She had a large and very favourite harpsichord, or pianoforte, and the king, who had set a watch over her, believed that while that remained in Berlin he was secure of her. She was therefore obliged to resort to artifice to effect her escape. She sent the instrument to be repaired, but ordered that instead of being returned to her abode, as soon as the work was done it should be forwarded to Vienna. When she had reason to believe it was secure from capture, she and her husband secretly followed it with all expedition. The wary Frederick was soon apprised of their escape, and despatched a messenger immediately to Joseph the Second, then Emperor of Germany, desiring that he would arrest them. The emperor with great kindness condescended to let them know that there was no resisting the desire of the King of Prussia, and therefore advised them to hurry away as fast as possible, that he might inform the king his messenger had come too late. Whether she came then at once to England I know not.

Soon after I was introduced to her, she sung in the concerts at Oxford, but, sitting during the time

when the choruses were performing, as was the custom with superior singers on the Continent, the audience were offended, and the reverend heads of the colleges abruptly dismissed her. Conceiving that public prejudice might arise against her, she requested Salomon to bring me to her, that I might hear her defence and take up her cause. I did so in a public journal, and, refusing all pecuniary recompense, we became very intimate; and I was upon the most friendly terms with her and her husband till an unfortunate attachment on her part to a young musician occasioned a separation between them, and I then discontinued all intercourse with both, that I might not be thought to take part with either. Indeed, I saw what had been going on some time before the event occurred, and took the liberty of giving Madame Mara some advice on the subject, but, finding it of no avail, I absented myself.

The husband was very much attached to her, though unfortunately more attached to the bottle; all her remonstrances were of no effect; she therefore adopted the measures which I have mentioned to get rid of such a domestic annoyance.

Mara was a very sensible and intelligent man, and by all accounts a good musician. I heard him once perform at the Pantheon in a duet on the violoncello with the celebrated Crosdill, who was unrivalled on that instrument; Mara nevertheless received great applause for the rapidity of his execution. When his resources failed him here, he went to Berlin, where he was a favourite with Prince Henry, the uncle or cousin of the king who had formerly endeavoured to detain him; but, unable to subdue his Bacchanalian propensity, he lost the

favour of that prince, and died afterwards in obscurity.

When he accompanied his wife to York, during the zenith of her fame, to perform in that city, I had a letter from him, in which, not having acquired much knowledge of the English language, he informed me, "that Charles Fox was then in York, followed every where by the *mop*, and that the *ringleaders* of the place were going to give him a dinner."

Madame Mara went abroad not long after the separation, and I heard nothing of her for many years, except that she had settled at Moscow. She was there during the French invasion, and lost two houses and other property amidst the patriotic conflagration which saved the country from Gallic plunder and despotism. After many years she returned to England, and surprised me one morning by an unexpected call on me at the Sun Office in the Strand. We then resumed our old friendship, and I saw her frequently during her stay in London. Her fame was still high in the musical world; and Sir George Smart, knowing my intimacy with her, applied to me, requesting me to use my influence with her to induce her to accept 50*l.* a night to sing at the oratorios, she having previously demanded 100*l.*, alleging that, as Catalani had only that sum, she ought to perform for less. I found her inflexible. She was evidently not aware that her musical powers had declined.

She was soon after engaged to sing at the Hanover Square concerts, but some impediment interfered. Anxious to know how her voice remained, I asked one of the chief musical leaders, and his

answer was, "She dined with me on Sunday." "That is no answer to my question," said I; "what is the state of her voice?"—"All I can say," rejoined he, "is, that Mara is still Mara." In fact, they had not courage to tell her of the decay of her talents, but, conceiving she would be less attractive, they evaded the engagement.

When she finally left England, she visited her native country, Hesse Cassel, from which she wrote to me a long letter, telling me how kind the Princess had behaved to her, having patronised a concert, provided apartments for her, supported her table, and paid her travelling expenses to some distance on her return to Revel, where she fixed her residence after the loss of her property at Moscow.

Madame Mara possessed a masculine understanding, and had been so much used to male society, which she preferred, that she was little qualified for an intercourse with the female world. She was animated in company, and uttered humorous and shrewd remarks. During her short stay in this country she was countenanced by some of her former patrons, and had two guineas a lesson for teaching singing, but by no means met with such encouragement as might tempt her to remain. Mr. Broadwood, the great musical instrument manufacturer, lately brought me a message from her, informing me that she had begun to write her reminiscences, half of which she had written in German, and asking my advice whether she should proceed with it in English. I advised her to adopt the latter.

I had introduced Dr. Wolcot to her, whose talents she understood, and whose humour she enjoyed. We

passed the evening with her which preceded her departure on her first return to Italy; and asking him to write a farewell impromptu, he immediately wrote the following couplet:—

Dear Maras, ere you cross the Alps,
You'll catch d—d colds in both your scalps.

MRS. BILLINGTON. I knew this admirable singer when she was very young, and was present when she first appeared in public, and performed a concerto on the pianoforte, at seven years old. Her brother, on the same night, performed a concerto on the violin, when he was nearly of the same age. They both displayed extraordinary powers, even without considering the early period at which they had acquired so much skill. She was born at Baugh, in the year 1765. Her father was of a noble family in Germany, but by the decline of its rank and fortune he was obliged to cultivate his musical talents for a profession. From the early skill of his children, it may be presumed that he was an excellent tutor. He was a harsh and severe man, and partly on account of his temper his wife was induced to quit him, and to support herself as a principal vocal performer at Vauxhall Gardens, retaining the name of Weichsell, though separated from her husband. I regret to say that neither of the parents held forth a good example to their offspring.

Mrs. Billington in her youth entered into a clandestine marriage with Mr. James Billington, a very respectable musician, who belonged to the band of Drury Lane Theatre, and performed on the double bass. He was a lively, intelligent, and worthy man. He had great humour and general knowledge; he

was particularly fond of pictures, and a good judge of their merit. From some drawings which I have seen, made by himself, I think he would have been a good artist if he had devoted his attention to painting rather than to music. He was a very pleasant and agreeable companion, and calculated to make an affectionate husband.

If Mrs. Billington's connexion with the theatre led her into errors in the earlier part of her life, much allowance ought to be made for the want of a good example in her parents, or rather to the impression of such an example upon a young and active mind.

That Mrs. Billington possessed a kind disposition, I, who knew her early and long, can confidently affirm. Her great talents rendered her an object of envious rivalry, and interested scribblers defamed her character. The man who, by his influence over her mother, obtained all the property of the latter by a real or pretended will in his favour, took possession of that property, and had the revolting indecency to remove it from her lodgings, on the very day of her death; and notwithstanding his affected friendship for the mother, almost immediately after her death published a scurrilous life of the daughter, recording actions and events which existed only in the invention of disappointed malice and venality.

My father knew this man when he was much respected as an officer in the army, and lived in good society. He went to India, but conducted himself there in such a manner that he was sent home, and in consequence of his dissipated habits degenerated in character, and associated chiefly with those who procured unwary prey for a rapacious money-lender, who left

immense wealth at his death. What induced me to suspect that he obtained Mrs. Weichsell's property by means of a forged will, was a circumstance that occurred in the earlier part of his life. He courted a lady of some fortune and great expectations. In order to appear to her a man of property, he sat up the whole of several nights to fabricate fictitious title-deeds, which he submitted to her inspection. By these means she was tempted to marry him, but soon finding that she had forfeited the patronage of her family, and been duped by an adventurer, she threw herself from the window of a second floor, in the vicinity of St. James's, and was killed on the spot. He was a handsome sprightly man, and retained a military air even in the decline of life.

Bad as his conduct was, I must mention one circumstance to his credit. He had risen from parents in very humble life, and when he was walking one day with some of his brother officers, he saw an old woman at a distance, with a basket on her head; "Ay," said he, "there's my poor old mother; I must go and kiss her." She was really his mother. He ran to her, kissed her, shook her by the hand, gave her money, and then joined his companions. The poor woman was confused on his account, and endeavoured to avoid this act of filial duty and affection.

What became of this man I know not, whether he is dead or sunk into obscurity, but he is a lamentable proof of degeneracy of character; for when my father first knew him, he was esteemed a spirited young man of the most honourable principles, and perhaps at that period would have looked with horror on the possibility of his being guilty of such conduct as he

subsequently practised respecting the property of Mrs. Billington's mother, and still more on the idea of extorting money from the daughter by a libel on her life.

On the day when the work appeared, Mr. Billington purchased a copy as the ground for a prosecution. In the evening I called on his wife, to endeavour to soothe her feelings under such a virulent and venal calumny. I advised her to let the slander drop into obscurity. The husband and wife adopted my advice, and the work fell by its own malice, hardly affording the venomous calumniator, I will not degrade the name of author by applying it to him, the expense of his worthless publication.

It is not necessary to trace Mrs. Billington's progress in her profession. She first distinguished herself as a vocal performer of the highest class in Dublin; and her fame spreading widely, she was offered liberal terms by my late friend Mr. Harris senior, the principal proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, and appeared there in the year 1781. The play on that night was ordered by his Majesty George the Third. She displayed such powers on that occasion, as may be said to have established her fame, and secured her independence. She was soon after engaged for all the chief concerts in the metropolis, and for all the country music meetings, and at length received such inviting offers from Italy as induced her to visit that country.

Mr. Billington died at Naples. I lost in him a worthy and agreeable man, with talents which I doubt not would have enabled him to make a respectable figure in any other profession; and if her merits had been confined to private life, I am per-

suaded they were likely to have been a happy couple, but she was unfortunately, by her beautiful person and great musical powers, exposed to the dangers of admiration, flattery, and influence of the gay world.

Mrs. Billington, on her return to this country after the death of her first husband, continued in the most perfect harmony with his relations; and when his younger brother, an artist of great merit died, she attended his funeral on a very rainy day, and exposed herself in the churchyard, though so much depended on her voice. I was one of the mourners, and witnessed the sincerity of her grief on the melancholy occasion.

She was unfortunately married again to a Frenchman who had some connexion with Buonaparte's army, but, not living happily together, they parted, and she returned to this country, where she exerted her talents with equal splendour and success. She acquired a large fortune, and lived with liberal hospitality, allowing her husband a suitable provision. She frequently gave splendid concerts and entertainments at her large and elegant mansion near Hammersmith. At length, after her husband had borne a separation from her of about sixteen years, he signified that he could not subdue his affection for her, and desired her to rejoin him abroad. Many of her friends earnestly entreated her not to return to a man from whom she had so long separated, and whose only motive for requiring a reunion was, most probably, to obtain possession of the fortune which she had acquired. I wrote with the same view, and in her answer she says, "He is my husband, and I know my duty." I retain her letter.

I have been told that she held him in terror, and

that it is probable she returned to him because she knew the power of a husband, and was afraid of inducing him to exert it. She returned to him, and I never heard from her again. There were strange reports respecting the cause of her death; but as her brother, Mr. Weichsell, was on the spot, or near it, when she died, and does not give countenance to these reports, it may be concluded that they are not well founded.

On her death her husband returned to this country, and demanded her property from her trustee, Mr. Savory, her firm and zealous friend; and as there was no opposing claim, I understood from Mr. Savory that he paid him to the amount of about 40,000*l*.

On returning from one of her visits to Italy, her fame was so great that Mr. Hill, the proprietor of "The Monthly Mirror," requested I would give him a sketch of her life. I applied to her for that purpose, and in her answer, after mentioning the particulars of her family, she concludes with saying, "For God's sake do not make me more than thirty." This circumstance ought to have been introduced before. Such was the fate of Mrs. Billington, for whom I had a warm and pure friendship, and whom I shall always remember with sincere affection. She was beautiful in person, amiable in disposition, and possessed of the highest musical talents and attainments.

Mr. JOHN JOHNSTONE. This gentleman united the qualities of an excellent actor and a very agreeable singer. In the representation of Irish characters, he was much superior to any other actor within my remembrance. Moody was a good actor, but

heavy and sluggish, and in the performance of Irish characters his merit was chiefly confined to those of a lower description. But Mr. Johnstone was always active and sprightly, and admirable in representing his countrymen, whether of the higher or lower order, or in any of the intermediate degrees. The Irish of all ranks are known to be arch, witty, and humorous; and Johnstone had fully studied the national character. There was a peculiar spirit in his manner, and he had great penetration. His Foigard was perfect. His Sir Lucius O'Trigger, though of a totally different nature, he performed with equal skill. Sir Callaghan also was a part in which it was impossible for him to be excelled. But he was not confined to Irish character. Whatever parts required manly spirit, seemed always to have been written originally to draw forth his talents. He was a very lively companion, and had often been honoured by the countenance of his late Majesty, and admitted into the royal festive parties. His manner of singing humorous songs was superior to any other performer that I ever witnessed, and if asked for a song, he complied as readily as if he had been asked for information on any current event.

Many a pleasant hour I passed in his company at the hospitable table of our mutual friend Francis Const, Esq. the Chairman of the Middlesex Sessions. But though Mr. Johnstone was ready for any jovial occasion, he was wisely attentive to the dictates of prudence; and conscious of the uncertainty of the theatrical profession, the fluctuations of fashion, and the caprices of public taste, he managed the profits of his talents with discretion. While he lived like a

gentleman, and often entertained his friends, he avoided all extravagance; and from his entrance into the theatrical community, took warning from those who were careless and insensible to the value of independence, which it was his chief aim to obtain, for the purpose of not depending on the caprice or tyranny of theatrical managers; and that he might enjoy a competence in the decline of life. He was, however, one of those who might be indifferent to the conduct of managers; as he possessed talents that rendered him a prime favourite of the public, and consequently secured him a welcome reception at any theatre.

His figure was tall and manly, his face handsome and expressive, and there was an ease and firmness in his gait, which probably was the effect of his having, in the early part of his life, been in the army. Towards its decline, however, his person was much altered, but his mind retained all his sense of humour and vivacity till his last illness, which ended in his deliverance from all earthly troubles. I have dwelt the longer upon the character of Johnstone, because I thought highly of his intellectual powers, and am persuaded that he would have appeared to advantage in any situation that required attention, discretion, and sagacity.

MR. O'KEEFFE. This gentleman, who is still alive, and who may be considered *sui generis*, as a dramatic writer, I have long known, and have had the pleasure of writing two or three prologues, at his desire, for some of his dramatic productions. I have letters from him expressive of more thanks than such trifling favours could deserve. He had the misfortune to be blind ever since I knew him, and there-

fore was not able to take that part in company for which he was well qualified by original wit and humour, and, as I have reason to believe, also by learning.

He had written a play, of which our renowned Alfred was the hero, to which, at his request, I gave a prologue. In this prologue, I courted for him, of course, the favour of the public, and signified that they would no doubt be surprised that he who produced "Bowkit," "Lingo," &c. should venture to portray the glorious founder of our laws. This prologue was spoken, but I understood that it did not satisfy Mr. O'Keeffe, who considered himself as equally qualified for the serious and sportive drama. As a proof he was offended that I did not give him credit for a genius for the heroic drama, as well as for the luxuriance of his humour in farce-writing, when a subscription was raised for the publication of his works in four volumes, in order to purchase an annuity for him, to which I was glad to subscribe, though he introduced all the other prologues I wrote for him, he omitted the one in question; yet, if I do not mistake my own humble productions, it is one of the best of the many which I have written.

Mr. O'Keeffe mentions having met me in his "Reminiscences." I remember that I met him twice at the table of Mr. Daly, formerly the proprietor and manager of the Dublin Theatre, who was a handsome man, with a figure well formed for tragedy, and the higher characters of the comic drama. He remained in London some weeks, and I dined in company with him again at Mrs. Billington's. Mr.

Daly, according to reports, was irritable and impetuous, but if such was his temper, it did not appear in company, for while wit, humour, and raillery flew around him, he seemed rather disposed to share in the mirth, even when some of the sportive effusions glanced at himself.

Mr. Daly was the second husband of Miss Barsanti, a lady who distinguished herself in her early life at Covent Garden, by her theatrical powers, and her admirable imitation of French and Italian manners. Her person at that time was tall and slim, and her action, spirited, graceful, and elegant. Never did I see such an alteration in person and manners, as when I saw her as Mrs. Daly. She had become very bulky, and though amiable and attentive, her manners were plain, and she seemed as if she had been a rustic matron who had never seen the metropolis. Her husband's attention to her seemed to invalidate all the unfavourable reports of the irritability of his nature.

CHAPTER IX.

MICHAEL KELLY. Though I class Mr. Kelly among theatrical performers, I rank him also as a private friend, for a more friendly nature I have not known. Though he had no pretensions to literary merit, he did not want good taste, nor was it confined to his musical profession. Allowing for vanity, an essential ingredient in human nature, he possessed humour, and was a pleasant companion. "His Reminiscences," from which I have derived more amusement than from similar works written with higher claims to literary notice, represent his character faithfully, and prove what I have before said of him, viz. that he was only an enemy to himself. His hospitable turn, resulting from the habits of his country, as well as from his own liberal disposition, prevented his acquiring that independence which otherwise his talents would probably have obtained.

Madame Mara, one of my early and most intimate friends, who was well acquainted with the world, gave me a favourable representation of Mr. Kelly before I knew him. She assured me that he was very good-natured, that he possessed great humour, and was peculiarly successful in imitating foreign manners, particularly those of foreign musical performers and composers. I had never any reason to think that Mara had been mistaken in his character.

He first appeared at Drury Lane Theatre in the opera of "Lionel and Clarissa," in which he per-

formed the part of Lionel. I did not admire his singing, and his acting was such an odd mixture of foreign manners and accents, supported by the native pronunciation of his country, Ireland, that, being connected with a public journal at the time, I did not wish to bring my humble judgment in question, or to say anything injurious to a young man who came to London with high musical fame, and of whose private character I had heard a good report. I was the more disposed to decline criticising his performance, on account of Messrs. Sheridan and Richardson, proprietors of Drury Lane Theatre, with whom I was intimate, and who expected much advantage from his talents. I therefore requested Mr. Richardson to give an account of Kelly's first appearance; the interest which he took in the theatre, as well as his own benignant temper, induced him readily to undertake the task, and his report was highly favourable. Kelly then, from his intimacy with Stephen Storace, a musical composer of great merit, and with the kind aid of Mr. Cobb, the dramatic author, had songs and characters provided for him, which brought him forward, and enabled him to become a favourite with the public.

Kelly was ambitious of high and literary connexions, and his cheerful disposition and amusing talents forwarded his pretensions. By his own account in his two published volumes, he must have been patronised, and admitted to a familiar intercourse with many of the most distinguished characters in Europe, in point of rank as well as talents. Few persons, indeed, seem to have enjoyed a more happy life, or to have passed through the world with a less offensive, or indeed a more conciliating temper.

He has fallen into some mistakes in his biographical work, but they are all of a trifling nature, and hardly worth notice. In his first volume, he gives an account of what befell a countryman of his own, according to the report of a Venetian. The Irishman had unguardedly thrown out some reflections on the Venetian Government, having suffered by a theft; the Venetian, therefore, advised Kelly to keep a "*silent tongue*," lest he should be involved in similar danger. I have a similar story to relate on indisputable authority, and I may therefore presume that similar events have happened under the same vigilant and formerly rigorous Government.

The fact which I am going to mention I derived from Mr. Roma, a native Venetian, who assured me that he was on the spot at the time. An Austrian prince, passing through the streets of Venice, was struck by an embroidered piece of stuff in one of the shops, and ordered one of his attendants to buy and bring it home with him. The man did so, but it was pillaged from him as he passed. When he informed his master of the loss, the prince said that he thought the Venetian Government was too vigilant for such a theft to take place. Within an hour after, the Austrian prince was summoned to a legal tribunal then sitting. He was introduced into a darkened room, where sat three judges in black attire. He was formally asked to tell his name, his rank, and his motive for visiting Venice. Having answered these questions, he was then asked, with the most awful solemnity, if he had ever uttered any reflections on the Venetian state. The prince was so bewildered with the scene before him, and the terrific aspect and manners of the judges, that he

was unable to recollect till he was reminded of his loss, when he attempted to stammer out an apology for what he had uttered on the occasion. He was then told that he was excused, as a foreigner, but that he should have a proof of the vigilance and justice of the Venetian government. Folding doors were then opened into a very light room, and the thief was seen hanging with the embroidered stuff under his arm. As soon as the prince was released from this terrific tribunal, he took his departure immediately from Venice, and did not stop on his journey till he was out of the reach of its government.

Mr. Kelly's connexion with Mrs. Crouch brought him more forward in the eyes of the public. I knew her first when she was about fifteen years of age, and she was one of the most beautiful young women I ever saw. Her person pointed her out as destined for an appearance in public life, and she was studying music at the time. I passed an evening with her at the house of her father in Gray's Inn Lane. He was a solicitor, but had been in the mercantile sea-service before he entered the profession of the law. It was impossible for me to be in company with so beautiful a young woman and not pay particular attention to her; but her father kept a rigid eye upon her, and looked displeased when anything was addressed to her in the way of compliment. I remember that she sang "My lodging is on the cold ground," a popular song at that time, with so much sweetness, feeling, and expression, that I augured highly in favour of her success in public life. Her progress on the stage as an actress as well as a singer, fully justified my anticipation. I retained my friendship with her till her death, and had many

opportunities of supporting her talents through the medium of the public press, of which I always availed myself.

I was once highly mortified in learning that she thought I had severely commented on her acting in a morning paper. The circumstance was as follows: I met Kelly one morning, and, after the customary greeting, I asked after Mrs. Crouch. His manner of answering seemed a little mysterious, and induced me to desire an explanation. "Why, to tell you the truth," said he, "she is much offended with you, as she hears you have mentioned her harshly in a newspaper." Finding that she was at home, I hastened instantly to the place. There was a gloomy expression in her countenance, which was increased when I said, "Mrs. Crouch, I have a crow to pluck with you." Conceiving herself to be the aggrieved party, "With me?" said she, indignantly. "Yes," said I, "for supposing it possible that I, who had known you from your youth, and was a friend to your family as well as to yourself, could have written anything adverse to you, without the least offence on your part. I solemnly assure you that my humble pen has never been employed to your prejudice, but always in your favour." Having known me many years, and having very often experienced proofs of my friendship in public journals, she readily gave credit to what I said, and by her beautiful smiles amply compensated for her previous adverse glances.

I was not satisfied with this vindication of myself, but, as she performed in the evening, I sent a letter to her in the green-room the same night, in which I repeated my assurance that she had been misin-

formed, and declared that the person who had given the false information, was "a liar and a scoundrel," desiring her to disclose the contents of my letter to any other person who might have heard of the accusation. She was, of course, fully satisfied.

I soon discovered the malignant source of this falsehood. A man of talents as an artist, but who had an unfortunate itch for scribbling, was a voluntary contributor to a public print with which I was connected, but in the management of which I had no concern; and he frequently employed his pen in the most venomous effusions of his spleen without provocation. He was the author of this attack on Mrs. Crouch, and, hearing that it excited great attention among the theatrical community, and was considered as an act of wanton malevolence, he became apprehensive of detection, as he was known to write for the paper in question, and therefore hinted to Mrs. Crouch that I wrote the theatrical articles in that paper, insidiously leaving her to conclude I was the author.

Having previously had reason to believe that he had attempted to shift other articles of a similar kind upon me, I was soon confirmed in my suspicion, and resolved at once to put an end to the connexion, though I had been in habits of intimacy with him many years, and always had a full reliance on his friendship. I therefore wrote to him immediately, accused him of his perfidy with respect to Mrs. Crouch, and mentioned other victims of his malice, to whom he had excused himself by attempting to throw the odium upon me. Instead of denying the charge, he demanded my authority, and as I could not betray confidence, I contented myself with silent

contempt for the present ; but as we were connected with a wide circle of mutual acquaintance, and the dissolution of our friendship excited much attention, I revenged myself by writing a character of him in doggrel verse, of which I never gave a copy, but read it to every body who called on me for the purpose of hearing it. I soon found that his character was better known to his acquaintance in general than it had been to me, and that they all admitted it to be an accurate portrait. Many solicited a copy, but I never gave one, on account of his family.

We had belonged to an evening club, from which I withdrew, as it was not unlikely that very unpleasant feelings might have arisen had we both been subsequently present at the same time ; not that any violence was to be apprehended on his part, for he was a very timid man, and a great deal of his time was passed in making explanations and apologies to his friends for some *mistake* into which he had fallen from misrepresentation. He once made a caricature of Mr. Kemble, in which Mr. Sheridan was represented as holding Kemble's head *in terrorem*, to frighten people from the theatre,—a design as absurd as malignant, since it was evidently Mr. Sheridan's object to allure them. Hearing that Mr. Kemble was likely to resent such an insult, this insidious and perfidious man requested me to call upon him, and assure him that he had no hand in the caricature, but that it was done by some zealous friend of his, who thought that Mr. Kemble had insulted him, by desiring him not to remain behind the scenes on a busy night when there was hardly room for the performers to move.

This was, indeed, the foundation of the attack on Mr. Kemble, by the man himself, and not by any zealous friend. I delivered his message to Mr. Kemble, whose answer was, "Well, Taylor, if the man chooses to tell a lie, I may as well put an end to the matter by affecting to believe him." He had been introduced on the occasion alluded to behind the scenes by Mr. John Bannister, with whom he was very intimate, and Mr. Kemble, then manager of Drury Lane Theatre, seeing him there, observed that the admission of strangers interfered with the business of the stage, and requested that he would retire. This act of duty and necessity on the part of the manager, excited the resentment of the visiter, and induced him to resort to the pitiful revenge which I have mentioned.

Fully to illustrate the character of this vain and envious man, he had reported that Mr. John Bannister, on an application for pecuniary assistance from his father, had refused to assist him with a loan of five guineas, unless he would leave his watch as a security for repayment; and he therefore called Mr. Bannister junior the "little pawnbroker," though he was on terms of friendship with him at the same time. This malignant fabrication reached the ear of young Bannister, and as I was returning to town very early one summer morning, just as I entered Piccadilly from Hyde Park, I was saluted from a hackney coach, in which I found Mr. Bannister junior, and my old friend Harry Angelo, who has recently published his amusing "Reminiscences." I soon learned that they were on their way to call on the man whom I have been describing, in order to

make him apologize to Mr. Bannister for the opprobrious falsehood which the latter had invented against him. I reasoned with them on the impropriety of disturbing a man with his family, probably before he had risen ; and Bannister agreed to return, provided I would go with them and read my character of the man to our friend Rowlandson, the celebrated artist, who had not heard it. As I never gave a copy of this character, and as the subject heard of it from many quarters, I felt, perhaps, a blameable gratification in conceiving that he probably supposed it to be much more severe than it was possible for me to have made it.

But I have forgotten my friend Michael Kelly all this while. In the second volume of his "Reminiscences," he relates an anecdote respecting Mr. Sheridan, which he said he derived from the late Mr. William Woodfall, but, as he does not state it correctly, I shall mention it as I heard it, more than once, from Mr. Woodfall himself, who was my particular friend, and on whose veracity as well as memory I could perfectly rely.

It is well known that Mr. Sheridan was engaged in a duel with a Captain Matthews, with whom he had previously been on friendly terms, attended with peculiar circumstances of mutual animosity, and even of desperation. A letter on this subject, containing severe reflections on Mr. Sheridan, appeared in "The Bath Chronicle," or some other Bath journal. In consequence of this letter Mr. Sheridan waited upon Mr. W. Woodfall, then the proprietor and conductor of "The Morning Chronicle," of which he was the founder, and requested that Mr. Woodfall would copy the letter from the Bath

paper into his own journal. Mr. Woodfall expressed his surprise that Mr. Sheridan should wish to give a wider circulation to so bitter an attack on him. "That is the very reason," said Mr. Sheridan, "for as I can refute every part of that letter, I wish the attack and the answer to be spread over the kingdom, instead of being confined to a provincial paper." Mr. Sheridan added, that on the day after the letter appeared in "The Morning Chronicle" he would bring the refutation. Accordingly the letter was published in "The Morning Chronicle," but Mr. Sheridan, though applied to for the refutation, never wrote a syllable on the subject, and from mere negligence or contempt thus disseminated a calumny against himself.

Mr. Woodfall said, that when people came to him with complaints against Mr. Sheridan for inattention, he used to relate this anecdote to them, and ask how they could expect more attention from one who was so negligent in matters that so nearly affected his own reputation. Such is the fact as I heard it from Mr. Woodfall.

The only part of Mr. Kelly's work which I read with regret was a passage which related to Mr. Richardson. I will cite the passage. "Mr. Richardson was a good man, and one of my most intimate friends, but, like his great prototype and bosom friend, was indolence personified, and *to-morrow*, as with Sheridan, was his day of business. He even seemed ambitious of imitating the foibles of Sheridan, which was bad taste, considering the disparity of their talents; for as the Spanish poet Garcia observes, 'the eagle may gaze steadfastly at the sun, while the butterfly is dazzled by the light of a taper,'

not but that Richardson possessed considerable literary talent."

This passage naturally offended Mr. Richardson's three surviving daughters, very amiable and accomplished women. I knew Mr. Richardson from his first leaving St. John's College Cambridge till his death, and can affirm that what Mr. Kelly styles "indolence personified" was a fondness for study, reading, and reflection, and a reluctance, except upon absolute necessity, to leave his family, consisting of his wife, a remarkably intelligent woman, and four amiable daughters, one of whom died some years after his death.

Mr. Richardson did not speak in the House of Commons, because he knew that his Northumberland accent might expose him to ridicule; as he had a high sense of personal dignity, for I will not call it pride. But his literary exertions in support of the Fox party, his comedy of "The Fugitive," his share in "The Rolliads and Probationary Odes," and other exertions of his pen, of which Mr. Kelly could know nothing, should have exempted him from a charge of extreme indolence. But besides that I cannot perceive the applicability of the quotation from the Spanish poet, I must say Mr. Kelly was totally incapable of forming a due estimate of the powers of Mr. Richardson, who was the favourite and chief confidential friend of Mr. Sheridan, a person certainly much better qualified to decide upon Mr. Richardson's intellectual faculties and attainments than Mr. Kelly.

Mr. Kelly mentions a baker who was the moderator at the celebrated Robin Society, which was held in Butcher Row, St. Clement's. He says that his

name was Tarcombe, but I understood from my father that it was Jacocks, and, as well as I can recollect, I saw it over his door at his shop near the west end of Monmouth Street. I once saw this person, who was one of the most dignified men I ever beheld. He was a tall and a large man of a very grave aspect. He was, I understood, remarkably skilful in summing up the debates at the speaking club above mentioned, and in weighing and commenting on the arguments of the several speakers. Some of the first characters of the country were frequenters of this club; and the great Lord Chesterfield declared, that he considered Jacocks as fully qualified to be a prime minister. Such a man, therefore, deserves a better record than I can give to his memory.

I cannot take a final leave of my friend Michael Kelly without expressing my sincere regret that his harmless and pleasant life should have passed during some years before his death in so lamentable a state, from the effects of the gout, as to render him wholly unable to move without assistance; yet when once seated at a convivial table, as I have seen him at that of the late Dr. Kitchiner, his vivacity never deserted him, and he was ready to entertain the company by his good humour, his anecdotes, and his musical talents.

It should be mentioned, in justice to Mr. Kelly, that he retained the most affectionate remembrance of Mrs. Crouch till his last moments; and knowing that I had been acquainted with her long before she appeared in public, he seemed to feel a melancholy pleasure in imparting his feelings to me. I knew her father and brother. The former held a situation

in the Castle at Dublin ; the latter, a very handsome man and an excellent singer, was a major in the British army.

Michael Kelly was so much in favour with his late Majesty George the Fourth, that he annually received from that lamented monarch 100*l.* as a contribution to his benefit. If Kelly “was not witty in himself,” his facetious blunders were “the cause of wit in others ;” but his temper was so good, that he never was offended at the liberties taken with him, but attempted to retort their raillery, and generally gave fresh occasion for more sportive sallies on his ludicrous mistakes. There were latent seeds of judgment in his mind, derived from long and varied experience in several countries ; and amidst all his humours and eccentricities, his opinion might be safely consulted in matters of importance.

On one occasion, when Mr. John Kemble was grave and silent, after many persons had expressed their sentiments on a particular subject, and Kemble appeared in dumb solemnity, Kelly turned towards him, and aptly applied the words of Hamlet, “Come, Kemble, ‘open thy ponderous and marble jaws,’ and give us your opinion.”

Mrs. Horrebow, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing many years, is the sister of Mrs. Crouch. She was at Calcutta as an actress, and was acquainted with my brother, who died at that place. When I once dined with her at Mr. Kelly’s, she related the following story, which I insert, as it holds forth a proper lesson to pride, affectation, and hypocrisy.

When Mrs. Horrebow returned to this country, there was a gentleman and his niece passengers in

the same ship. His name, I think, was Dawson. They intimated to the captain that they did not consider it proper that an actress should be permitted to dine at the same table with them, as the profession of an actress was generally marked by suspicion, if not profligate conduct. The captain opposed this illiberal intimation, and observed that as Mrs. Horrebow was lively, intelligent, agreeable, and polite in her manners, he could not think of excluding her from the table. It appeared that a few days after, one of the passengers had the curiosity to peep through the key-hole of the cabin assigned to the uncle and niece, and there beheld a scene by no means consistent with the relation between them, and the scrupulous delicacy which they had assumed. This curious person disclosed what he saw to the captain, who mentioned it to the other passengers. On the day following at dinner, some of the company who had supported the cause of Mrs. Horrebow, hinted at the fastidiousness of those who objected to the theatrical profession, and yet were guilty in private life of greater immoralities than were or could be represented on the stage. Other hints of a similar kind were thrown out, and some too direct to be mistaken by the parties to whom they alluded. The gentleman and his niece were evidently disturbed by these pointed references, and suddenly withdrew. Not appearing on the following day when the company assembled at breakfast, a message was sent to them, but, no answer having been returned, it was determined, after a consultation, to have the door broken open. On gaining entrance, a lamentable scene was presented in the dead bodies of the uncle and niece,

both of whom had been shot, but the sound of pistols had not been heard during the night, probably owing to the roar of the ocean. A melancholy warning to those who affect to be "righteous over much."

CHAPTER X.

GEORGE COOKE the actor. I knew this person when we were boys together. He was two or three years my senior. He was a heavy-looking lubberly boy, and the last person I should have expected to turn his attention to the stage, particularly to the assumption of heroic characters. A fire happened at Rotherhithe, which was extensively destructive. George Cooke and myself went together to Wandsworth Common, to a lady who resided there, to whom Cooke's mother was distantly related, and to whom a lady intimately connected with my family was also related, and then upon a visit. The lady of the mansion was a spinster, much advanced in years: her name was Dunwell, and she inherited the house in question and the fortune of her cousin, Mr. White, who had been dead some years. He was, I was told, one of the Reading Clerks to the House of Lords, and, by all accounts, a very amiable and intelligent man. He was known in the higher literary circles of his time, and frequently dined at Lord Oxford's in company with Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, and the usual visitants at his Lordship's table.

It was the custom of Mr. White, whenever he

returned from any of the dinners at Lord Oxford's or elsewhere, to insert in a book all the anecdotes and remarks which had been made by any of the company; and he always annexed the name of the person who had related the anecdote or made the remark. The book was nearly full of these memorials. Miss Dunwell died, and left the mansion and her fortune to the lady whom I have mentioned as being upon a visit when Cooke and I went to communicate the melancholy intelligence of the fire which had destroyed the house in Rotherhithe where that lady had resided. The manuscript book was lent to me, and I remember to have read in it most of the anecdotes which I have since found in the posthumous work of Mr. Spence.

As Mr. White was dead, and there was no person in the family of a literary turn, the book was little regarded, and I might, as the phrase is, have "had it for asking;" but at that time I was insensible of its value.

On the death of Miss Dunwell, as the lady who succeeded to her possessions was a particular friend of my family, and the godmother of one of my brothers, I was in the habit of visiting the house, and remaining there for some days. There was a good library, without any parade of binding, and some excellent Flemish pictures in the drawing-room. The dining-parlour contained portraits of Lord Radnor, Mr. Wilmington, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, friends of Mr. White, as well as a portrait of that gentleman. As far as I can presume to judge of these portraits from recollection, compared with the knowledge which I have since derived from long experience in subjects of the fine arts, they were well painted in

oil, of the kit-cat size. Those of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick were in crayons, and I afterwards saw them in the possession of my father's old friend Mr. Mynors, the surgeon, of Chancery Lane, who has been dead many years, and I know not what became of them: they were painted by Vispre, who put his name to them. They must have been painted in the meridian of the lives of Garrick and his wife, and were admirable likenesses.

George Cooke's mother had a legacy left her by Mrs. Dunwell. Mrs. Cooke was a crazy old woman, and much annoyed the late Rev. Mr. Harpur, one of the executors. Mr. Harpur was one of the officers of the British Museum. Mrs. Cooke frequently called on him, and demanded her legacy, which he could not pay till certain legal forms gave him authority. On one of her visits, the unfortunate state of her mind was too evident, and was attended with melancholy consequences. While Mr. Harpur and his wife were sitting at breakfast, Mrs. Cooke suddenly burst into the room, and in a vehement manner demanded the corpse of her son, accusing Mr. Harpur of having murdered him. Mrs. Harpur was in a very declining state of health at the time, and knowing nothing of Mrs. Cooke, was much shocked at the violence of her manner, and the horrid crime imputed to her husband. Mr. Harpur, who was a very sensible man, with great presence of mind, feeling for the agitation of his wife, quietly told Mrs. Cooke that she had not taken the right course in order to recover the body of her son, and to bring his murderer to justice. "You should go," said he, "to Sir John Fielding's office in Bow Street, accuse me of the murder, and he will send his

officers to bring me to justice. I shall then be tried for the crime, and punished if I am found guilty." "Well," said Mrs. Cooke, "I will do so immediately," and quietly departed.

Mr. Harpur took especial care to prevent a repetition of such an outrageous intrusion; but the shock which Mrs. Harpur suffered in her declining state, was thought to have hastened her end. I learned this circumstance from Mr. Harpur, with whom I had afterwards the pleasure of being well acquainted. He was a remarkably well-bred gentleman, of the Chesterfield school.

The inconsistent and extravagant conduct of George Cooke may, perhaps, be not improperly traced to the mental infirmity of his mother. Very many years had elapsed before I heard anything more of him than that he had been apprenticed to a printer at Berwick-upon-Tweed. Hearing that a Mr. Cooke had acquired high provincial reputation as an actor, and that he had been a printer, I began to think he might be the person I had known when a boy.

Understanding that he was engaged at Covent Garden Theatre, and that he was to rehearse the part of King Richard on a certain morning, I asked my friend the late Mr. Lewis, the great comic actor of his time, and who was then the stage-manager, permission to attend the rehearsal; and he readily consented. It was with difficulty that I could trace the lubberly boy whom I had formerly known, through the great alteration of his person. At the end of the rehearsal, still doubtful, I addressed him, and asked him if he recollected to have known such a person as myself. He remembered our intercourse, but de-

clared I was so much altered, that he should not have known me. I attended his first appearance in the character of Richard the Third, and sat with Mr. Serjeant Shepherd, now Sir Samuel, a gentleman who was held in the highest respect and esteem by his brethren at the bar, which, however, he was obliged to abandon on account of deafness.* I had the pleasure to find that Mr. Shepherd concurred with me in my opinion of Cooke's theatrical merit. We agreed that he showed a shrewd reflecting mind, but that his manner was rough, coarse, and clumsy. The house was not well attended: he was, however, well received. Mr. Kemble sat with his wife in the front boxes, and was very liberal without being ostentatious in his applause.

Cooke was strong, but coarse. He had not the advantage of much education, but had a shrewd penetrating mind, was well acquainted with human nature, and was powerful in those characters for which his talents were adapted, and they were chiefly of the villainous. He thought of nothing but the indulgence of his passions, particularly devoting himself to the bottle. I found him one night in the green-room during his performance so much affected by liquor, that he was unfit to appear before the audience. He seemed to be melancholy, and when I asked him the cause, he said he had just heard that Mr. Kemble had become a partner in the theatre. "Of course," said he, "I shall be deprived of my characters. There is nobody but Black Jack whom I fear to encounter." I assured him that he mistook Mr. Kemble, who knew his value too well to

* Sir Samuel Shepherd's father was a respectable tradesman in Cornhill, and much esteemed by all who knew him.

deprive him of any part. "For his interest," said I, "he would rather bring you more forward. He will revive "Antony and Cleopatra," he will be Antony, you Ventidius. He will be Othello, you Pierre; you Richard, he the Prince of Wales; you Shylock, he Bassanio;" and I mentioned other parts in which they might cordially co-operate. These remarks cheered him, and he said, "If so, we will drive the world before us." In the mean time, I plied him with tumblers of water, and lessened the effect of the liquor, recommending forbearance of the bottle. He thanked me, and promised to take my advice, went home, immediately returned to his wine, and was rendered so ill, that he was confined to his bed the two following days.

MR. USHER, the actor. This gentleman was respected for his literary talents, and according to report, was the author of an elegant little tract, entitled "Clio, or a Discourse on Taste," which I remember to have read in early life, and which afforded me pleasure and instruction. It was afterwards, I understood, much enlarged, and approved by the critics of the time. He never rose to eminence in his profession, but the parts assigned to him he always supported with judgment, and was particularly attentive to *dumb show*, constantly exhibiting by his action a feeling correspondent with that of the interlocution in the scenes in which he appeared. He seemed to be of a very reserved disposition, and, instead of mingling in the green-room with the rest of the performers, always retired to the back of the stage during the intervals of his performance. Hence one of the performers designated him by the title of "The Recluse of the Lake,"

the name of a novel that had then been recently published ; and this title was afterwards generally applied to him.

I was acquainted with him, and held him in great respect, though his station on the stage was always of a very subordinate description. I found him modest, attentive, and intelligent. He had a daughter, who was a provincial actress of some repute, but I believe she never made her way to the London boards. I knew her also for a short time while she resided in London, and considered her as a very sensible woman. She was much too unwieldy for the stage when I knew her. I presume that they have long since made their exit from the mortal stage.

Considering Mr. Usher as a literary man, he may be considered as having devised a strange expedient for the improvement of his fortune. He purchased a great number of wheelbarrows, which he let every day to the itinerant daughters of Pomona, who drive these carriages through the streets of London. They were obliged to return these vehicles every night and pay for their hire. What space he had to dispose of these travelling machines on their nocturnal return, I never knew, but, according to report, he lost so many of them by the dishonesty of these fair votaries of the goddess of vegetable luxuries, that he abandoned the scheme as a ruinous speculation.

MR. JOHN PALMER, the actor. This was an extraordinary performer, and the best I have seen in the characters for which he was peculiarly adapted, such as Brush in the "The Clandestine Marriage," Brass, or Dick, in "The Confederacy." I have seen him play both admirably. His Henry the Eighth

was an excellent performance. He could also support characters of manly sensibility, such as Sydenham, in "The Wheel of Fortune," a character which he rendered so prominent, even with Mr. Kemble's Penruddock, that the former character sunk into insignificance on Palmer's death. His Joseph Surface was understood to have been written by Mr. Sheridan, as a delineation of Palmer's real character.

Mr. Palmer was certainly not calculated for the higher characters of the drama, but perhaps it would be impossible to excel, or even to rival him in those that were suitable to his talents and qualifications. I once saw him attempt Macbeth, but was much disappointed; and in my opinion, he was equally unsuccessful in Falstaff; though he was by no means deficient in humour, yet it did not rise to a level with that of the facetious Knight.

Mr. Palmer was always silent in company, but he compensated by his expressive gestures for his taciturnity. I once dined in company with him at the late Dr. Arnold's. George Colman the younger was present, and where he is there can be no want of lively sallies. There were other clever men present, and wit and humour abounded. Though Palmer was silent, he was attentive, and his expressions of surprise, admiration, and pleasure, as the repartees flew from each person, enabled him to fill the scene as well, and with as much satisfaction to the company, as if he had been one of the most active speakers.

Having so fine and commanding a person, he was a great favourite of the ladies, and had a high character for gallantry. Being upon familiar terms with him, when I once saw him knock at a door

in Great Pulteney Street, I shook my head in order to indicate that I thought he was on some gallant pursuit. Instead of asking what I meant, as a man innocent of the implied suspicion would naturally have done, he said, "I live here;" and when I gave another doubtful shake of the head, he said, "Upon my word, my family are up stairs;" and he parted with me in good-humour, acknowledging, that rumour had given me just grounds for my suspicion.

But comic characters were not the only ones to which he rendered ample justice. He could not, indeed, as I have observed, perform the higher parts of tragedy. His Macbeth did not display powers of suitable elevation, but his Macduff was very impressive; and on his death Mrs. Siddons, speaking of his merits, said to me, "Where shall we again find a Villeroy and a Stukely?" He was indeed admirable in both of those characters, particularly in the former, chaste, dignified, and interesting.

MR. KEAN. Having given some account of the theatrical performers who have fallen within my notice, beginning with Mr. Garrick, it might reasonably be thought strange, if I said nothing of so very conspicuous a character in the theatrical world as Mr. Kean. The truth is, that I never could perceive in him those high professional merits which the public have not only evidently, but most fervently acknowledged. I was unwilling to oppose my humble opinion to the public judgment; and, as a public critic, I deemed it cruelty to attack a man in his profession, even if I could possibly have persuaded myself that my weak censure might do him an injury. Such has been always my rule in writing

theatrical critiques, either on performers or dramatic authors.

I saw Mr. Kean on his first performance in London. The part was Shylock, and it appeared to me to be a favourable specimen of what might be expected from a provincial performer, but I could not see any of those striking merits which have since appeared to the public; and, finding in his progress that his fame increased without any apparent improvement, in my humble judgment, and, as I before observed, reluctant to oppose public opinion, I avoided as much as was consistent with the duty of a public journalist to notice his performances. But I hope I shall not be accused of vanity in saying, that I found my silence in public, and my observations in private, had brought upon me the imputation of being an enemy to Mr. Kean. I should be shocked, indeed, if I felt conscious that I deserved such an imputation. As a proof, however, that such a suspicion had gained ground, I dined once with my old acquaintance, Mr. Pascoe Grenfell, M.P. at his house in Spring Gardens, when Mr. and Mrs. Kean were of the party, and I heard afterwards that Mrs. Kean, a lady by no means unwilling to communicate her sentiments, had expressed her surprise, either to Mr. Grenfell himself, or to one of the company, that Mr. Taylor should be invited to the same table with Mr. Kean. I happened to sit next to Mr. Kean at dinner, and paid him particular attention, to obviate, or soften, any displeasing feeling on his part, and endeavoured to enter into conversation with him on dramatic subjects; but, though he conducted himself with politeness, he seemed of a re-

served and taciturn habit, yet without the least indication that he thought himself near a person inimical to his fame. I have since seen Mr. Kean in most, if not all, of his theatrical exhibitions, and I can even solemnly declare that I went for the purpose of enlightening my mind by the public judgment, but unfortunately my opinion remained precisely the same; I say unfortunately, for otherwise I should have received from his acting the same pleasure which the public have enjoyed.

Perhaps it may be thought that I am biassed by my recollection of Garrick, whom I saw in many of his performances, when I was twenty and twenty-one years of age. If so, I cannot but admit the charge, since I am supported by the testimony of the best authors and critics of his time, as well as by the opinion of all his theatrical contemporaries. Far from feeling a prejudice against Mr. Kean, I should have been happy in joining with the million in admiration of his abilities, as he is the grandson of an old and long esteemed friend of mine, Mr. George Saville Carey. And here let me stop to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of a very worthy man, and a man of real genius.

George Saville Carey was the son of Henry Carey, a very popular dramatic author, but more particularly known for his fertility in song-writing. His "Sally of our Alley," has been long a favourite ballad; he was the author of "Chrononhotonthologos," and other dramas popular at the time; and is mentioned in Dr. Johnson's "Life of Addison" as one of Addison's most intimate friends. His son, my old friend, laboured to prove that his father was the author of the words and music of

what has been styled the National Anthem, "God save great George our King."

Henry Carey was a musician as well as a dramatic writer, but being, like too many of the literary fraternity, improvident, and careless of the future, he was reduced to despair, and hanged himself on the banister of the stairs where he resided. A single halfpenny was all that was found in his pocket; and it came into the possession of my father's old friend Mr. Brooke, whom I have before mentioned, and who kept it as a mournful relique of departed friendship.

George Saville Carey, I believe, had no recollection of his unfortunate father, though he cherished his memory, and was well acquainted with his works. The son, it is said, was originally apprenticed to a printer, but he soon adopted the theatrical profession, with however so little success that he became a sort of public orator and mimic, in which capacity I became acquainted with him early in my life. He was chiefly a mimic of the theatrical performers of that time, but introduced many odd characters in his miscellaneous compositions, which he publicly recited. I remember to have heard him deliver his recitations at Marylebone Gardens, now covered with elegant mansions. Like his father, he was a musical performer, and accompanied himself with skill and taste on the guitar.

As the nature of his profession induced him to lead an itinerant life, I never knew when or where he died, but have reason to fear not in prosperous circumstances. He wrote many songs and other poetical productions; but as he kept them in reserve as instruments of his calling, I only know them as

he recited them in public, or to me when he called on me. I only knew of his death, when his daughter, whom I understood to be the mother of Mr. Kean, called on me to sell some musical productions of her deceased father; and on more than one occasion that child accompanied her, who was destined to become the most popular and attractive actor of his day.

I have introduced these circumstances, merely to show that I had more reason to be the friend of Mr. Kean than to be adverse to his talents.

I will venture to say a few words respecting Mr. Kean as an actor. He had the sagacity to perceive that there were many points and passages in dramatic characters, which performers in general passed negligently over in their endeavours to support the whole of the part, but which admitted of strong expression. These points and passages Mr. Kean seized upon, and brought forth, sometimes with archness, and often with a fiery emotion, which made a strong impression on the audience, and essentially contributed to his extraordinary success. That he performs with great energy, must be readily admitted, and it is to be hoped that he will inoculate some of his professional brethren with the same fervour.

Here I conclude my observations on Mr. Kean, heartily rejoicing at his prosperity, as he is the grandson of my old friend, and as he is well-known to be a liberal-minded man, and ready to manifest a generous zeal to assist any of the theatrical community who fall into distress.

It may be mentioned among the extraordinary vicissitudes of life, that when the late Mr. John Kemble, in his almost idolatrous admiration of Shak-

speare, during his management of Drury Lane Theatre, performed Macbeth, he introduced the children according to a passage in the play as spirits—

Black spirits and white,
Red spirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may.

Mr. Kean figured as one of those spirits, and was afterwards destined to perform the royal usurper himself on those very boards, and to draw popularity from that other great tragedian. Mr. Kemble did not consider that his own grave taste might on such an occasion differ from that of the majority of the audience, to whom the comic capering of the infantile band had a most ludicrous appearance, as, indeed, happened to be the case.

At this time Mr. Kean, being weak in his legs, was obliged to have them supported by iron props. My friend George Colman the younger, having seen the boy in this situation, and to whose ready wit and humour I, as well as most of his friends, have often been a victim, said, "Oh! I remember the child, and I called his legs Fetter Lane sausages."

In the same spirit of Shakspearian idolatry, Mr. Kemble, at Covent Garden Theatre, had the table in the banquet scene in "As you like it," supported by horns, instead of wooden legs, though, in a forest, wood might have been deemed more convenient and sylvan-like in its appearance. But who can blame his enthusiastic admiration of the greatest dramatic poet that the world ever knew, and whose chief characters afforded him scope for the exertion of his talents, and the attainment of his high and well-merited professional reputation?

MR. BARRYMORE. This actor, whose real name was Bluett, which he abandoned for one that he thought was more acceptable to the public, was never a great, but yet a respectable performer in the middle sphere of comedy or tragedy. He was the first Pizarro in Mr. Sheridan's translated and improved play of that name.

Mr. Barrymore had a good person, above the middle stature. He had always a just conception of the part which he assumed, and performed with great spirit, and sometimes perhaps with too much, in the extreme ardour of his feelings.

I remember a ludicrous instance, which shows the humour of Mr. Sheridan. Mr. Barrymore performed the part of Blondell, in the musical afterpiece of "Richard Cœur de Lion," and displayed such an excess of animation, that Mr. Sheridan whimsically observed that Blondell seemed to be as much surprised to find he was Blondell, as the rest of the dramatic characters were to hail him as the friend of the captive monarch. This idea pleased Sheridan so much, that he ran about the green-room, while Barrymore was on the stage, exclaiming in imitation, "I find I'm Blondell—I'm really Blondell—Egad, I'm Blondell. How strange! I'm Blondell." When Barrymore returned to the green-room, and heard what had occurred, he was much displeased, but Sheridan's winning manners soon coaxed him into good humour.

Mr. Barrymore assured me that he often went dinnerless into the passages of Drury Lane Theatre, to secure a place at an early hour when Garrick performed; and he dwelt with animation on the excellence of that incomparable actor. Mr. Barrymore

had for some time been unemployed, but was restored to the stage by Mr. John Kemble, during his management of Covent Garden Theatre, and he always spoke of Mr. Kemble's kindness with fervent gratitude.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. BENSLEY. It may be thought that the same reason which might have prevented Mr. Quick from venturing on the stage, would have operated on this gentleman, viz. the peculiarity of his voice, the tones of which were grave and often nasal ; but he possessed a good education and a sound understanding. He was originally an officer in the marines, and was present at the taking of the Havannah. He had not only a peculiarity in his voice, but a wild habit of rolling his eyes, and a formal stiffness in his deportment ; but his good sense and gentlemanly manners triumphed over all his defects, and rendered him a deserving favourite of the public.

The stiffness of his gesture, the solemnity of his manner, and his peculiar tones, all operated in his favour in the part of Malvolio, and, perhaps, it may be fairly said, that he could not be excelled in that character ; but, in my opinion, his Mosca, in "The Fox," was the part in which he chiefly shone. He was peculiarly qualified for grave, sententious, and moral characters. He was spirited in Pierre, and sufficiently subtle and impressive in Iago. His Prospero was a grave and dignified performance.

Before he ventured on the stage, Bensley was the

intimate friend of Churchill, the elder Colman, Lloyd, and Wilkes, a proof that his intellectual powers and attainments were not of the common order. In his latter days he was very intimate with the late Lord Torrington, and Mr. Windham, the latter of whom induced him to retire from the stage, and procured for him the situation of barrack-master, the profits of which, with his wife's fortune, and his own prudence in the management of his theatrical income, enabled him to receive his friends, and to live like a gentleman, a character which he uniformly maintained in private life. It is lamentable to record, that towards the decline of his days, his mental faculties decayed, and precluded him from society, and even from domestic intercourse, but did not disturb the serenity of his temper. A rich relation, of the same name, left him, according to report, about 50,000*l.*, but this great acquisition, which ought to have been rendered beneficial to him at an earlier period, when it was probably wanted, did not disturb the placidity of his nature.

His wife, a very amiable lady, survived him many years, and I wrote a tribute to his memory, for which she sent her thanks to me as an acknowledgment of the truth of my humble memorial. His connexion with this lady was somewhat romantic. Seeing her in danger of falling from a restive horse at Bristol, he rushed forward, like an adventurous knight errant, and rescued her from peril. This accident produced an acquaintance, which was followed by a marriage.

I think his intellectual malady must have appeared in some degree before it became the object of much notice, for I remember to have seen him stand-

ing in the north Piazza of Covent Garden, staring for some time earnestly at the church clock. It was just at the time when Mr. Kean seemed to be the wonder of the town, and by some silly bigots was said to excel Garrick. I accosted him, and in a brief conversation said, "I thought Garrick was the greatest actor that the world ever saw." "Who ever thought otherwise?" said he, and abruptly departed, contrary to the gentlemanly courtesy which had marked his whole life.

THE ELDER BANNISTER. This actor was one of my early acquaintances, and a more manly character I never knew. He was born with a powerful frame, a strong constitution, and vigorous passions. His voice was powerful, but he was capable of singing pathetic airs. He had a good understanding, and was quick at repartee. Some of his *bons-mots* would have been widely circulated and recorded if they had come from a character in higher life. His errors were the effects of his passions, and these were the progeny of his vigorous constitution. His social disposition led him into habits of dissipation and pecuniary embarrassments, by which the mind is too often led into errors, particularly when a convivial turn is accompanied by the companionable qualities of wit and humour; but I am persuaded that he never contracted a debt that he did not intend most honourably to discharge, relying on his talents and reputation for a certainty of engagements.

I have seen him in his sober and in his festive moments. In the former, with a disposition to jocularity, he was always gentlemanly in his manners; and when under the influence of a social glass, the same disposition prevailed, and, as far as my observa-

tion of his character enabled me to judge, he was never in the slightest degree inclined to be quarrelsome, but rather to indulge more in waggery.

That he was an affectionate father I have no doubt, and I doubt not also, he found an affectionate son in all his difficulties ; thanks to the filial regard and prudent wisdom of the latter. It is gratifying to me to recollect that, whenever he met me, he said, " I am always glad to meet you, as you are a friend of Jack's." And so I was, and I should have been very ungrateful if I had been otherwise, for I have often derived pleasure from his son's public talents, as well as from his hereditary wit and good humour in private life.

Charles Bannister was an excellent mimic, and, as far as a natural timidity would permit him, a very good actor, for, manly as his character was, I have been assured that he felt an awe of the public eye, which he never could entirely overcome, and that when he was to appear in a new character, he walked upon the stage in great agitation before the curtain was drawn up, and could not subdue this emotion, even in parts most familiar to him. He was more likely to injure himself by misplaced confidence, than to injure any body by meanness or dishonour. What he might have been in any other station or profession, it is not, in my opinion, difficult to say, for I am sure a manly spirit would have been predominant, and generosity, as well as wit and humour, would have rendered him as conspicuous as his situation would allow. His Caliban, in the opinion of my friend Gifford, a much better judge than myself, was the most perfect assumption of character that he had ever witnessed on the stage.

But, in reality, Charles Bannister was born for good humour and conviviality—

To doff the world, and bid it pass.

With all his careless excesses, he was always designated, by those who best knew him, by the name of “Honest Charles Bannister,”—a designation to which I heartily subscribe, when I reflect upon his intrinsic character, and what affluence would have made him.

MR. ROBERT PALMER. This actor was very well calculated to follow his brother John in impudent footmen, and all characters of that description, but by no means in the higher order of comedy. He was excellent in rustic characters, and in the representation of inebriety. He was a very good-natured fellow, and was generally styled Bob Palmer. Though well acquainted with the town, and all its careless, if not dissipated characters, there was a simplicity in his nature that was somewhat extraordinary. At present I remember one instance. Happening to meet him one morning when I had seen a paragraph in the newspaper, stating that a Mr. M.’s brother had eloped with his wife, I asked him to whom the article alluded, and having told me the name of the injured party, he added, “If a brother of mine had served me so, d—n me if I would ever speak to him again!”

Honest Bob had the usual ambition among actors to appear in characters for which nature had not designed him, such as grave and sententious moralists, and he once announced “an attempt to perform Falstaff,” which, indeed, was *an attempt*.

MR. JOHN QUICK. I have already mentioned this gentleman, but may nevertheless be allowed to say

something more of a most excellent actor and a very worthy man, with whom I have been intimate many years, and with whose talents I have often been gratified. Mr. Quick is still alive, and by his social qualities and abundant good-humour is able to delight those friends with whom he associates in his quiet retreat at Islington. I have not had the pleasure of seeing him for many years, but in passing by his house within the last three, I called on him twice, and was both times disappointed.

Mr. Quick's understanding, talents, and knowledge of life, would have qualified him for the highest characters of the drama, though comedy was his proper sphere of action, if nature had given to him a person and voice suitable to the heroic province. There is hardly any species of character in the comic drama which he did not personate with critical precision, as well as with exuberant humour, except, perhaps, the parts of youthful gallants, in what is styled genteel comedy. Yet he could well assume characters of rank, such as ancient splenetic barons, where pride and arrogance were essential; but in middle and lower life his humour was always appropriate and irresistible in effect. He never gave offence by indulging a luxuriance of gaiety, but was always strictly adherent to his part, except in such diverting decorations as were in exact correspondence with it, and such as the author might expect in an actor to give animation to his own design. In all Shakspeare's clowns he fully executed the conception of his great author, and said no "more than was set down for him." His Dogberry may be said to have been as perfect a personation as any ever represented, even by Garrick. His affected pity

at the ignorance of Vergis, while he glaringly exposes his own, made the audience always regret that the scene was not longer. His voice was so peculiar, that it seems strange it did not originally deter him from thinking of a theatrical life; but he managed it so well as always to render it natural and correspondent with the part which he represented. His Tony Lumpkin was perfect in rustic bluntness and humour, nor was he less effective in Justice Woodcock. His misers were admirable and finished portraits. He was no less admirable in Touchstone, exhibiting a perfect conception of the character, and illustrating it by his own original waggery.

On one occasion, when he was performing the part of Justice Woodcock, and Mrs. Billington that of Rosetta, the song in which she says, "I'll reward you with a kiss," and gives one to the Justice, was encored; and as he was of course gratified by a repetition of the same favour, he came forward and bowed gratefully to the audience, who were highly entertained by this prompt testimony of good humour. He liberally allowed the talents of his competitors.

I remember once asking his opinion of Shuter, whom I regret to say that I do not sufficiently recollect as an actor, considering my opportunities. He spoke of Shuter's talents with the warmest panegyric, and concluded with saying that he was "*all honey.*"

Here I may properly quit the theatrical qualifications of my old friend, and refer to his private character. He was, and I doubt not is, the same respectable member of society that he always has been, a

good husband and father. His daughter is married to Mr. Davenport, a teacher of languages, and the author of two valuable dictionaries, one Italian and English and the other Spanish and English. He resides in Doctors' Commons, and, before his advanced age disabled him, Mr. Quick, since his retirement, used every day to walk from Islington to see his daughter, and indulge the feelings of an affectionate father.

MRS. BEMBRIDGE. In the early part of my life I became acquainted with a widow of this name. She was the mother of Mr. Bembridge, who held a good situation in the Army Pay Office for many years, but was dismissed during the time that Mr. Burke was paymaster, contrary to Mr. Burke's efforts to retain him in his post. Mrs. Bembridge was much advanced in years, but retained good bodily health and a perfect possession of her intellectual powers. I was always fond of associating with old persons, from whom I expected to derive knowledge; and as I listened with pleasure to this lady, she took much notice of me. Her connexions had been of a high order. I understood from her that it was the custom in her early days for gentlemen to take their female friends with them to their tavern dinners; and she told me, that upon an occasion of this nature she was present when Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, Prior, and other distinguished wits were of the company; she was introduced by a near relation, being anxious to witness such a scene.

Soon after dinner a message was delivered to Prior, who suddenly rose and was leaving the room. Pope asked him in a low tone the cause of his quitting the company; and he answered softly that

he had received a message from Chloe, who had been arrested, and that he was going to release her. Whether he returned to the company I know not, or have forgotten.

Many accounts have been given of this memorable Chloe, the favourite of one of our best poets; but, according to Mrs. Bembridge, who professed to have authentic information, she was the wife of a barber in Long Acre, who had by no means a delicate sense of conjugal purity, and thought he was honoured by Prior's *patronage* of his wife, though probably not indifferent to a more convenient compensation.

Mrs. Bembridge informed me that at a later period she had a house at Twickenham, so near to that of Pope's that their gardens were close to each other. She had no intercourse with her neighbour, but was one day surprised by a note from Mr. Pope, importing that, with her consent, he would have the pleasure of taking tea with her. She of course signified that she should be proud of the honour of receiving him. He came, and desired to take a walk in her garden. The lady accompanied him, and, as he was attracted by some object, he advanced a few steps before her, but suddenly turned and said, "Madam, I beg ten thousand pardons, you had a shocking prospect before you," obviously alluding to the deformity of his person.—"Ah, Master Taylor," said the old lady, "it was then I felt my deficiency; I wanted to say something about the honour of having a visiter of his genius and fame, but I could only blush and look foolish."

Mrs. Bembridge described Mr. Pope as having been very talkative at the tavern dinner mentioned before; but that Lord Bolingbroke was reserved,

though attentive to all that passed, and at times cast around him such penetrating glances as were calculated to excite awe wherever they were directed. Mrs. Bembridge must have been a very handsome woman, judging from the interesting remains of her person when I knew her.

Dr. Monsey told me, that in paying a visit one morning to a nobleman, whose name I do not remember, as he was chatting and standing by the fire, a little man, who was sitting near, made such shrewd comments on what passed as he was unable to answer, and that he soon after left the room, wondering who this mean-looking clever man could be; upon enquiring of the porter, when he quitted the house, Monsey was told that it was Mr. Pope. The doctor said he was ready to bite his tongue off for having taken leave, as he had been anxious to get into company with the great poet, but never saw him after. As the doctor was so free in his manners with persons of all ranks, it was very strange that he did not invent some excuse to return to the room, as he was one of Pope's warmest admirers, and very often quoted from his works.

Mrs. Bembridge was an intimate friend of Mr. White, reading clerk to the House of Lords. I had read a manuscript book written by Mr. White, in which he had made minutes of all he had heard at the tables of Lord Bolingbroke, the Earl of Oxford, and other great houses. Among the articles in that book was the following story as related by Mr. Pope.

Shakspeare, after his retirement from the stage, used, on his visits to London and also on his return, to rest at the Crown at Oxford, the chief inn in that city, then kept by Mr. Davenant. This landlord had

a son to whom Shakspeare was godfather, and who was therefore christened William. Mrs. Davenant was a very handsome woman, and it was surmised that Shakspeare was more than a *god-father* to the boy. Billy Davenant was always sent for from school when Shakspeare arrived, and one day when the boy was running home he was met by a head of one of the colleges, and asked where he was going in such haste. The boy said, "I am going to my godfather, Shakspeare."—"What!" said the gentleman, "have they not yet taught you not to take *the Lord's name in vain*?"—in which he was supposed to allude to the rumour against Mrs. Davenant's conjugal fidelity.

Such is the story as I copied it from the manuscript, and many years ago communicated to the world through the medium of the public press. I have since discovered that my father's old friend Mr. Oldys relates the same story in his manuscript, as having also received it from Pope at Lord Oxford's table, and states that it was a townsman of Oxford, not the head of a college, who addressed the boy; but the answer, in my opinion, is more pointed in Mr. White's account of the story, and more suitable to a scholar than a townsman.

Mr. Steevens's disbelief and contempt of this story is truly ridiculous, viz. that from Sir William Davenant's "heavy, vulgar, unmeaning face," he could not be Shakspeare's son: as if nature was always consistent in transmitting beauty and deformity. But surely Mr. Steevens might have traced some lineaments of Shakspeare's mind in Sir William, who was shrewd, intelligent, and a good poet; and whose son seemed to carry on the intellectual features, as

he was a scholar, and published several learned works. Yet for the honour of Mrs. Davenant's character it would be liberal to distrust the story, though not upon the same grounds as the absurd scepticism of Mr. Steevens.

There is another story respecting Shakspeare, which I have read, but know not where, and which I may mention because every thing that relates to our great dramatic bard must have some interest attached to it. It is said that Burbage, the chief actor in Shakspeare's time, had made an assignation with a lady of a tolerating disposition, and that he was to call on her when he had performed his part at the theatre, and that when he knocked at the door and she answered him from the window, his signal was to be, "I am Richard the Third," the part which he had previously performed. Shakspeare, according to the story, overheard the appointment, and determined to forestall Burbage; and as either gallant was equally acceptable to the lady, Shakspeare was well received. When Burbage came and knocked at the door, Shakspeare looked out of the window instead of the lady, and in answer to Burbage's signal, "I am Richard the Third," said, "But I am William the Conqueror, and he was the first." It is not unlikely that this story might have furnished a hint to Otway for his lamentable incident in "The Orphan."

There was another curious anecdote in the same manuscript book, which I copied and gave to the public prints many years ago. It stated, that on the night after the decollation of King Charles the First, his body was placed in a room at Whitehall, and that the Earl of Southampton sat in the room to

guard and manifest his respect for the royal corse. About midnight the door opened, and a person entered so muffled that he could not be known, who, after slowly walking to the coffin, looked at the corse some time, and having exclaimed, "Cruel necessity!" as slowly retired. Lord Southampton said he could not discover the person, but thought from his figure and voice that it might be Oliver Cromwell.

Having mentioned these anecdotes to my late friend Mr. Malone in a letter, he favoured me with the following answers, which I submit to the reader, as they afford additional proof of the indefatigable zeal with which he pursued all subjects that he took in hand, and of the judgment and acuteness with which he treated them.

Mr. Malone was quite a gentleman in his manners, and rather of a mild disposition, except when he had to support the truth, and then there were such firmness and spirit in what he said, as could hardly be expected from one so meek and courteous; but he never departed from politeness and respect. The following is Mr. Malone's answer to the first of these anecdotes :

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

An unusual press of business has prevented me from thanking you for your notices concerning Davenant's being the supposed son of Shakspeare. But you are in an error in supposing that the story which you mention is not noticed in my edition : it occurs there twice ; once from the papers of Oldys, who says he had it from Pope at Lord Oxford's

table, (see vol. i. part i. page 158, and additional anecdotes, Warton's long note, &c.) and again the fact is alluded to in vol. i. part ii. page 270. It also occurs, under different names, in Taylor the Water Poet's Jests. Oldys having got hold of the story, I could not give it well from myself, but shall give it in form in my new edition, with some new additional evidence. By the way, you see how stories gather as they run; for, according to your relater it was a grave head of a house who asked the boy this question, and made the sly observation on Davenant's answer; but Oldys, with more probability, says, that the questioner was a townsman of Oxford. Then again we are told that Shakspeare went to London every second year, whereas, unquestionably, as long as he was connected with the stage, he went every year.

I am, dear Sir, with many thanks,

Most faithfully yours,

E. MALONE.

Foley Place, September 12, 1810.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

The anecdote you mentioned (as derived from Pope,) of a man skulking into the chamber at Whitehall, on the night when the body of the murdered Charles was laid there, is told also by Spence, in his anecdotes, from the same authority. But it is good for nothing: the perfidious Cromwell had no such feelings. Read the trial of the Regicides, and you will there find that when he saw Charles landed at Sir R. Cotton's garden, and he was sure they had

caught him, he turned as white as a sheet; and just after, he and Harry Martin and others entered into a consultation how to destroy him; and they agreed that the best preparation for that work, would be to *blacken* him enough. Besides, Mr. Herbert, to whom the care of the body was consigned, has left memoirs, and having minutely noticed every little circumstance, and doubtless sat up with the body, he would hardly have omitted such a circumstance as this.

I have quite forgot what you told me concerning Johnson's prologue to Goldsmith's play. Pray be so good as to send it to me. The life will very soon go into the press.

Yours, dear Sir, faithfully,
E. MALONE.

Foley Place, Oct. 13, 1810.

To the zeal, judgment, and accuracy, of Mr. Malone, the world is indebted for a valuable account of the English stage, and for many interesting particulars respecting the works, life, and family, of Shakspeare. It is not unlikely, that the story importing that Sir William Davenant was supposed to be the son of Shakspeare, which I derived from the manuscript book written by Mr. White, is the most correct, for Mr. White immediately wrote all the anecdotes that he heard at Lord Oxford's table, and Oldys having so many literary works in hand, might not exactly recollect it. According to Aubrey's account, as published by Wood, Sir William was contented to be thought the son of Shakspeare, no great compliment to the memory of his mother. That the report had some foundation is obvious,

since it was mentioned by Taylor, the Water-Poet, and probably by others at the time. At all events, whatever relates to Shakspeare must be interesting.

As to the anecdote respecting the supposed visit of Cromwell to the body of King Charles, it is strange that Mr. White should have mentioned Lord Southampton as sitting up with the body, and not Mr. Herbert. But, perhaps, they both performed that melancholy duty, and during an occasional absence of Mr. Herbert, the muffled man might have entered as described, and he therefore did not notice what he had not himself seen. Admitting that Cromwell was the mysterious visiter, the fact was perfectly consistent with the hypocrisy of his character, and a natural desire, even in such a character, to acquire some reputation for humanity.

It is somewhat strange that Mr. Malone should not have noticed Mr. White's statement, that Lord Southampton was the person who attended the body of the murdered monarch, as there can be no doubt that it was so represented by Pope in the hearing of Mr. White, who did not mention the name of Mr. Herbert. Why must the story be untrue? And why must Cromwell have turned as white as a sheet *because* he had *caught* the King? Turning white is not the indication of joy. Granting the fact, may it not rather be inferred that Cromwell was confused by the sudden arrival of the King, and apprehensive that the people might rise in support of their persecuted monarch, and the rebels be finally disappointed, particularly as they deemed it necessary to blacken his character in order to prepare the minds of the people for the dreadful catastrophe which they had

in view? This appears to me to be a more probable solution of Cromwell's paleness than that it resulted from the pleasure of getting the unfortunate monarch into his power. Upon the subject of the rebellion and the regicides, it has always appeared to me that Clarendon wrote from his feelings rather than from his reflections on the conduct of the conspirators after the melancholy event had occurred. Yet I reproach myself with temerity in venturing to differ from so judicious and venerable an authority.

Recurring to the subject of Shakspeare, a subject that must be ever interesting to those who are proud of their country, I will venture to hazard a conjecture. It is well known that there is a traditional story, importing that Queen Elizabeth, pleased with Falstaff, desired the author to prolong the character, and represent him in love, and that, in consequence of this request, he wrote "The Merry Wives of Windsor." But that seems to be an erroneous conception, for Shakspeare has not invested him with the noble and disinterested passion of love, but has made him a mercenary profligate, and a pander, totally contrary to the supposed wish of the queen. If it be true that Elizabeth expressed a desire to Shakspeare that he would write any play, it appears to me that the play in question must have been "Henry the Eighth;" for whatever her filial affection and reverence might be, she must have been convinced, that the tyranny and turbulence of her father's character were not likely to receive a favourable report in the record of history, and might therefore wish that the great poet would soften his character, and transmit him to posterity, through the

Mr. Cumberland expatiated upon the health of his

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medium of the drama, with a princely dignity, and a temper blunt but not brutal. It is not possible that Shakspeare would have presumed to introduce the character of her father, and have brought forward the play, without full authority, and a direct request, if not a positive command.

Shakspeare has wonderfully succeeded in drawing the character of Henry, giving a favourable colouring to his tyranny, cruelty, and caprice, and such as must have satisfied Elizabeth; and this conjecture places her in the light of an affectionate and respectful daughter. This supposition, in my humble opinion, gives probability and strength to the traditional story of her having desired Shakspeare to write a play, but not that in which there is no conformity to her supposed requisition. Dr. Kenrick seems to have adopted the mistaken tradition, and to have been tolerably successful in giving the facetious and licentious old knight a more honourable passion in his ingenious comedy of "Falstaff's Wedding."

CHAPTER XII.

MR. RICHARD CUMBERLAND. What I remember of this gentleman was both disagreeable and pleasing. When he was not touched with jealousy of other writers, his manners were highly gratifying. He was full of anecdotes, but sometimes his memory failed, and little reliance could be placed on the accuracy of his narrations. He had a great command of language, and has left full evidence of his having been a good scholar, as well as a sagacious critic. His observations on "The Fatal Dowry" of Massinger, compared with "The Fair Penitent" of Rowe, which my friend Gifford has introduced in his admirable edition of Massinger's Plays, are ingenious and profound; but it is by no means improbable, that if Rowe had been as distant from him in point of time, and Massinger as near to his period as Rowe, he would have found good reasons for preferring "The Fair Penitent," and his arguments have been as strong in favour of the latter.

The first time that I was in company with Mr. Cumberland, was at the chaplain's table in St. James's Palace. Among the party, was Dr. or Mr. Jackson, one of His Majesty's chaplains. Jackson, whose character resembled that of Mr. Cumberland in veneration for the higher ranks, began with asking how Lord Edward Bentinck was, that nobleman having married a daughter of Mr. Cumberland. Mr. Cumberland expatiated upon the health of his

lordship, and nothing was heard but about his lordship for some time, his lordship's title adorning every inquiry, and closing every answer. At length, when his lordship had sufficiently wearied the company, Lady Edward was introduced in turn, and engrossed nearly as much of the conversation as his lordship, with as much repetition of her ladyship's title.

When these subjects were exhausted, it became Mr. Cumberland's turn to inquire, and as Jackson was patronized by the Duke of Leeds, Mr. Cumberland, of course, thought it his duty to inquire after his Grace. His grace then was echoed over the table as frequently as had been his lordship and her ladyship. At length the conversation became general; but some contemporary dramatic author having been mentioned with commendation, Mr. Cumberland began to express his surprise that so favourable an account had been given of a writer so little entitled to notice, much less to praise. The gentleman who had commended the author in question, attempted modestly to support his opinion. Mr. Cumberland became heated, and spoke in so irritable a manner, that the gentleman thought proper to drop the subject.

Dr. Taylor, chaplain to His Majesty, and Jackson's coadjutor, was at the dinner, with the Rev. Mr. Penneck. Mr. Nicol, the venerable bookseller to His Majesty, and myself, after the dinner, adjourned for tea to the house of Mr. Nicol in Pall Mall; and I remember that Mr. Nicol, after a liberal compliment to the talents and attainments of Mr. Cumberland, concluded, in reference to the want of temper which he had shown at the table, with observing, that he was "a man without a skin."

Jackson was generally known by the designation of *Con. Jackson*, an abridgement of *consequential*, on account of the affected dignity of his deportment, and the manner in which he larded his conversation with the names of his noble connexions. My late friend Sir James Bland, who omitted his former name of Burgess, wrote a very humorous tale respecting this Dr. Jackson, entitled "*The Bishop's Wig*," founded on a report that the doctor had ordered a wig in expectation that he should obtain a mitre through the influence of his patron the Duke of Leeds. Sir James had written many other humorous productions of the same description, and I was not a little gratified, when, referring to my tale of "*Monsieur Tonson*," he addressed me once in company, and sportively said, "Ah! Taylor, nobody can write tales but you and I."

Mr. Cumberland certainly displayed his critical acumen, when he was the means of introducing Mr. Downton to the London stage, one of the best comic actors within my remembrance. It is with much reluctance that I have given this unfavourable account of a gentleman whom I cannot but admire as a scholar and an author; but though I could relate other anecdotes of the same kind, I shall take leave of him with one anecdote that was told me by my early and most intimate friend the late Mr. Richardson, author of the comedy entitled "*The Fugitive*," and one of the writers of "*The Rolliad* and the *Probationary Odes*."

Mr. Cumberland came one night to Mr. Sheridan's box in the theatre somewhat late, and stumbled at the entrance. Mr. Sheridan sprang forward and assisted him. "Ah! sir," said Cumberland, "you

are the only man to assist a *falling* author. Mr. Sheridan, in waggery or forgetfulness, said, "*Rising*, you mean," the very words which Mr. Sheridan has assigned to Sir Fretful Plagiary, in "*The Critic*," a character commonly understood to be drawn for Mr. Cumberland.

The name of MR. RICHARDSON will not suffer me to proceed to any other subject, till I have paid a tribute of sincere respect and regard to his memory. I became acquainted with him just after he quitted St. John's College, Cambridge. He was at that time a remarkably fine showy young man. I was struck by his admirable understanding and the peculiar force and elegance of his language, which appeared to me to have all the energy without the pomp of Johnson, with the terseness and spirit of Junius. As he was a total stranger in London, and had no college connexions in town, we soon became very intimate, and our friendship, with a short intermission, lasted till the end of his life. My admiration of his talents increased in proportion as I became better acquainted with him, and I had never any reason to alter my opinion of his intellectual powers. His short history, as I understood from one of his earliest friends, was as follows.

He was born at Hexham, in Northumberland, in 1755, and was the son of a respectable tradesman in that town. The father not being able to give him a university education, a titled lady in the neighbourhood, hearing of the promising talents of the young man, offered to send him to college, and to support him till he obtained a degree, signifying that he would probably make his way in life without requiring any farther assistance from her. After he

had been a few years at college the lady married, and then informed him that her husband did not think it proper that she should any longer support a fine young man, lest she should give occasion to the gossiping suspicions of a slanderous world. As Mr. Richardson did not choose to become a burthen upon his parents, he thought proper to quit his college, and to try his fortune upon the world at large. A gentleman whom he had known at Cambridge, and who was connected with "The Morning Post" newspaper, a few years after its origin, procured for him the situation of a literary contributor to that paper, and afterwards furnished him with the means of becoming one of its proprietors.

It is much to be regretted, that it is impossible to collect his various effusions in prose and verse, during his connexion with that paper, as they would doubtless have constituted a lasting monument of his genius, learning, and taste.

In due time Mr. Richardson's talents became known to a large circle of friends, in which were included Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Tickell, Lord John Townshend, Lord Fitzwilliam, the late Duke of Portland, and the late Duke of Northumberland. The last nobleman enabled him to become representative in Parliament for Newport in Cornwall.

He was called to the bar in the year 1784. Being of a modest and delicate temper, though he possessed great powers of language, and was a profound logician, the "wrangling bar" was not suited to his disposition; and to the same cause must be ascribed his indifference to reputation as a speaker in Parliament. Yet I am assured upon good authority, that in two or three contested elections for

country boroughs, he distinguished himself as a counsel by the shrewdness of his examinations and the force of his eloquence, though somewhat impeded by a provincial accent, which he never could sufficiently conquer; and this circumstance also doubtless deterred him from appearing as an advocate in the London courts of law. At length, becoming the chief confidential friend of Mr. Sheridan, he was induced to relinquish the bar altogether, and to turn his attention to the drama.

In the year 1792, his comedy of "The Fugitive" was brought forward at the King's Theatre,* in the Haymarket, and received with very great applause. The prologue was written by the late General Burgoyne, and the epilogue by Mr. Tickel. Mr. Richardson did not think proper to attend the performance himself, but his friend Tickel, who was present, undertook the office of transmitting to him, at the end of every act, an account of the manner in which it was received by the audience; and the very favourable reception which it experienced was, of course, highly gratifying to the distinguished friends of the author, as well as to himself and his family.

This comedy is written with admirable spirit. It can hardly be considered as an exaggeration of its merit, when it is said that the scene between Old Manly and Admiral Cleveland, is not unworthy of the genius of Congreve. It was supported in the representation by the first performers of the theatre, all of whom felt pleasure in testifying their respect for the author.

* Drury Lane Theatre was then rebuilding, and the theatrical company had removed to the Italian Opera House.

During the progress of the comedy, Mr. King who performed the part of the Admiral, having been taken ill, the late Mr. Kemble, who was then the manager, undertook the part, and displayed great judgment and more comic humour than was thought to be within the compass of his theatrical powers. By the profits of this comedy, and the assistance of some of the higher order of his friends, Richardson was able to purchase from Mr. Sheridan a fourth part of the theatre. The fame which he acquired by this comedy considerably extended the circle of his acquaintance, but, however tempted by invitations from his elevated connexions, nothing could induce him to neglect the society of his family; and as I was the most intimate of his private friends, and was always admitted, I am indebted to this domestic intercourse for many of the happiest days that I was ever destined to enjoy.

I cannot deny myself the pride of stating, that after he had communed with his wife, who was a very sensible and intelligent critic, I was the first friend whom he consulted on the subject of his play, and I retain the letter which he wrote to me on the occasion from Broadstairs, whither he had retired for the purpose of giving it a final revision. The manuscript was transmitted to me. I read it with the zeal and caution of a friend, and returned it with a sincere tribute of approbation, to the best of my judgment.

As I wrote an account of Mr. Richardson in "The Monthly Mirror," a periodical work of well-merited repute, by desire of the proprietor, during the life of Mr. Richardson, and the biographical sketch which

appears in the collection of his works, by desire of his widow, I need not prolong the subject in this place.

For some years I generally dined with Mr. Richardson on New Year's day, and the only persons invited besides myself, were Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Shield the musician. On the last of these occasions, my present wife was one of the party; and a pleasant day we enjoyed, not without a feeling of regret on observing the evident decline in the health of our worthy host. On this occasion, Mr. Sheridan, from memory, recited the verses descriptive of some of his political connexions, which my friend Mr. Moore has introduced in his life of that great ornament of English literature.

When the first wife of Mr. Sheridan died at Clifton, Mr. Richardson accompanied him, and witnessed the real tenderness and affection with which he soothed and endeavoured to console her in her last moments, and the grief which he felt when death deprived him of so amiable and accomplished a partner. Mr. Tickell, when he was deprived of his wife, was also attended by Mr. Richardson on a similar mournful occasion. Mrs. Tickell was the beloved sister of the former lady, who, though not so attractive in person as Mrs. Sheridan, resembled her strongly in mental powers, accomplishments, and disposition. Mr. Tickell, in the agonies of sudden grief, intended to have a tomb-stone raised at the place, and signified his resolution to inscribe it with his declared determination never to engage in wedlock again, but to continue during life wedded only to her remains. Mr. Richardson, who well knew the character of Mr. Tickell, persuaded him to

defer this affectionate tribute to a future period, alleging that if the tribute to her memory were immediately to be inscribed on the tomb-stone, it might be considered as only the effusion of temporary grief, but that if it were delayed for a twelvemonth, or a more distant time, it then would naturally be deemed the result of a settled conviction of her virtues, and a proof of his continued and durable affection. Mr. Tickell assented to this discerning counsel of his friend, and in a year or two afterwards entered into a second marriage.

Mr. Richardson continued to decline in health, and at length died on the 9th of June 1803, in the forty-seventh year of his age, though, from the original vigour of his constitution, he might have been expected to live to a green old age. This melancholy event took place at Virginia Water, near Egham, and he was buried in the church-yard of that town. His funeral was attended by Mr. Sheridan, by his old and constant friend Mr. Richard Wilson, by the late Dr. Coombe, the physician, and myself. As an extraordinary circumstance occurred on this occasion, it may not be improper to relate it.

The funeral ceremony was to take place at one o'clock in the day, but we did not reach the ground till a quarter after, and were surprised and grieved to find that the funeral rites had been performed. Mr. Sheridan was particularly affected, and traversed the churchyard in great anxiety. He said to me as we walked together, "Now this disappointment will be imputed to me, and it will be said in town by all our mutual friends, that it was owing to Sheridan's d—d negligence, which he could not shake off, even to pay respect to the remains of his dearest friend."

During this interval of anxiety, the clergyman who had performed the ceremony entered the churchyard. I left Mr. Sheridan, and inquired of the reverend gentleman what was the cause of this hasty interment, as greater latitude ought to have been allowed to friends who had to come twenty miles to attend on the mournful occasion, and who had arrived within a quarter of an hour after. The clergyman said it was owing to the undertaker, who alleged that he had another funeral to attend at a distant place. I then asked the clergyman if the ceremony could properly be repeated, as we were all bitterly disappointed that we were prevented from testifying our grief by partaking in the last offices of respect to the remains of a valued friend. The clergyman seemed to pause, and as I knew that my interference could be little likely to affect him, I hastened to Mr. Sheridan, and told him there was a possibility that the ceremony might be repeated. Mr. Sheridan then ran to the clergyman, telling him who he was, and earnestly entreating, if there were no impropriety in the measure, that the ceremony might again take place to satisfy the feelings of himself and his friends. The clergyman said that he was only the curate to his father, the vicar, and could not without authority comply, but would consult his father, and if he consented, return immediately, properly attired to repeat the ceremony. In a few moments he appeared dressed for the occasion. We then adjourned to the church, in which the funeral service was partly performed, and the remainder at the side of the grave, without removal of the coffin.

It is difficult to describe the sort of mournful

exultation with which Mr. Sheridan said he could now venture to face his friends in London, conscious that he had not failed in any respect to do honour to his departed friend. We dined at Bedford on our return to town, and Mr. Sheridan entered into an eulogium on his deceased friend, of whom he spoke with sincere emotion and affecting eloquence. Mr. Sheridan and myself were set down at the end of Bond Street, in Piccadilly, and I accompanied him to his house in George Street, Hanover Square, now occupied by my friend Dr. Pearson. As soon as we entered Conduit Street, he manifested great emotion, and in the agony of his feelings struck his head against the door of the nearest house, exclaiming that he had lost his dearest friend, and there was now nobody who could enter into his domestic cares and be a confidential agent, when occasion might require, between himself and Mrs. Sheridan. I endeavoured to soothe his feelings, and on parting with him at his own door, he designated me as "Joe Richardson's Legacy."

I have been the more particular in stating these, I trust not uninteresting facts, as they relate to two persons whose intellectual powers were of so high an order, and whose friendship, like that of Damon and Pythias, deserves to be recorded; and also because my friend Mr. Moore, in his "Life of Mr. Sheridan," has not correctly recollected what I related to him on the occasion, when I had the pleasure of dining with him at Messrs. Longman and Co.'s for that purpose. I shall cite the whole passage, because it seems to reflect on the memory of Mr. Sheridan; nor shall I, with affected modesty, omit that part which relates to myself, for who would not be

proud of praise from Mr. Moore? I have only to regret that I do not deserve it.

“The death of Joseph Richardson, which took place in this year (1803), was felt as strongly by Sheridan as anything *can* be felt by those who, in the whirl of worldly pursuits, revolve too rapidly round self to let anything rest long upon their surface. With a fidelity to his old habits of unpunctuality, at which the shade of Richardson might have smiled, he arrived too late at Bagshot (Egham) for the funeral of his friend, but succeeded in persuading the good-natured clergyman to perform the ceremony over again. Mr. John Taylor, a gentleman whose love of good-fellowship and wit has made him the welcome associate of some of the brightest men of his day, was one of the assistants at this singular scene, and also joined in the party at the inn at Bedford afterwards, where Sheridan, it is said, drained the ‘cup of memory’ to his friend, till he found oblivion at the bottom.”

In justice to the memory of Mr. Sheridan, it is proper to state, that when we called to take him up at his house, on going to the funeral, he came to the door, and apologized for not going with us, as he said he was first obliged to wait on the Duke of Bedford, but that he would overtake us on the road. I who, as Mr. Moore says, well knew his “old habits,” shook my head in doubt. Mr. Sheridan then said, “No—honour bright (a customary expression with him), you may depend on my overtaking you on the road;” and so he did at Turnham Green, where he quitted his own carriage and entered ours; and though at our return to Bedford he

certainly drank to the memory of his friend, it was to no unseemly excess.

In some degree to relieve this grave recital, I cannot help stating that in going, when we changed horses at Hounslow, Mr. Sheridan said he would walk over the heath, as he enjoyed but little exercise. In proportion as the coach followed him, he quickened his pace, and at last, to prolong his exercise, he began to run; and never did I see a more ludicrous sight than his figure, almost double, exhibited, while he continued to hasten his speed till the coach overtook him.

The scene in the churchyard would have been diverting also on a less melancholy occasion; for in our hurry to attend the melancholy ceremony, not knowing it had already been performed, we put on the mourning cloaks, without regard to their size, so that Mr. Sheridan had one that hardly reached to his knees, and Dr. Coombe, a very short man, had one so long that he trampled upon it, and nearly tumbled at every step. Naturally conversing on the subject of our departed friend in the coach, as we returned, Mr. Sheridan expressed his determination to write an epitaph on Mr. Richardson; and Dr. Coombe, who professed particular knowledge of stones, declared that he would select a durable one for the inscription. The epitaph, however, was never written, and the stone was never found.*

After the death of Mr. Richardson, I seldom saw Mr. Sheridan, and the last time I had the pleasure

* Mr. Richardson left a widow and four daughters. The mother and youngest daughter are dead, and I attended them to the grave.

of being in company with him, was at a tavern in Portugal Street, adjoining Clare Market. I had been dining with my old friend Jessé Foot on the anniversary of his birth-day, and Mr. Sheridan having learned at my residence where I dined, sent a message to me about ten o'clock at night, importing that he wished to see me on particular business at the said tavern. I rather offended my friend Foot by leaving him, but alleged the probability that Mr. Sheridan might really want me, and I was permitted to depart. I naturally expected to find Mr. Sheridan alone, or with some confidential friend, but found the table surrounded by jovial spirits, who seemed determined to celebrate their orgies till a late hour. Mr. Richard Wilson was one of the party. His cellar adjoining his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields being conveniently near, and the tavern-wine not being of the best order, Mr. Wilson abundantly supplied all that was wanted, and there was a call upon his bins till five in the morning, when the company separated, Mr. Sheridan having been in remarkably good spirits, and more than usually inclined to colloquial exertion.

I remember that speaking of a person who had published a pamphlet against him, he said in the course of the night, "I suppose that Mr. ——— thinks I am angry with him, but he is mistaken, for I never harbour resentment. If his punishment depended on me, I would show him that the dignity of my mind was superior to all vindictive feelings. Far should I be from wishing to inflict a capital punishment upon him, grounded on his attack upon me; but yet on account of his general character and conduct, and a warning to others, I would merely

order him to be publicly whipped three times, to be placed in the pillory four times, to be confined in prison seven years, and then as he would enjoy freedom the more, after so long a confinement, I would have him transported for life."

The remainder of the sitting passed with jollity, without any allusion to politics, and though Mr. Sheridan took the lead in wit and humour, yet he diffused a cheerful contagion round the rest of the company, and many sallies of merriment burst from other members of the party, who were previously known for talents and festivity.

Mr. Sheridan, unhappily, was not reputed to be the most prompt and punctual of paymasters. He was indebted to Mr. Shaw, the leader of the band at Drury Lane Theatre. Mr. Shaw, though a friendly good-natured man, tired with frequent applications without success, called on me, and said he wished to submit a statement of his situation and his correspondence with Mr. Sheridan to the public, observing that as it related to so conspicuous a character, it would attract much attention to any newspaper that contained it. He said that therefore he gave me the preference, requesting it might appear in "The Sun." He was highly incensed, and it was with great difficulty I persuaded him to let me write to Mr. Sheridan on the subject, and endeavour to procure an amicable arrangement, observing that, if he could not succeed in his application and the statement were published, he was not likely to be more successful after the matter appeared in print; and that I should despise myself if I endeavoured to draw attention to my newspaper by exposing the differences of friends. At length he assented, and I

wrote to Mr. Sheridan, who in his answer, which I have retained, desired me to appoint a meeting at my office between him and Mr. Shaw on the following Saturday. I accordingly wrote to Mr. Shaw for that purpose. Mr. Sheridan punctually attended at the appointed time, and I explained to him that any advantage which my paper might derive from the publication, could have no weight with me when his interest was concerned. His answer was so gratifying to me that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of mentioning it. "Oh," said he, "when *you* do an unkind thing chaos is come again!" Mr. Shaw, perhaps conscious of the persuasive powers of Mr. Sheridan, or unwilling to appear as an enemy before one with whom he had long been in friendship, did not attend the meeting, but came soon after Mr. Sheridan, who had waited two hours, left the place, desiring me to appoint a meeting with Mr. Shaw for the following Tuesday. On this occasion the latter attended, but Mr. Sheridan did not. He however sent Mr. Graham, a friend, to meet Mr. Shaw, and request him to accompany him to Sheridan's house, where the latter waited for him. These gentlemen went away together, and matters were settled, as I afterwards understood from Mr. Shaw, who told me that he had been able to obtain by my intercession 400*l.* of his money.

At a subsequent period Mr. Shaw applied to me again, in hopes that I might succeed upon a similar occasion. I immediately wrote to Mr. Sheridan, but heard no more of the matter, and therefore infer that a similar arrangement took place. Mr. Shaw, I understood, was brought into difficulty by accepting bills for a perfidious friend, and retired to

France, where he still lives, and most probably is able to support himself by his musical talents, and is doubtless esteemed for his manly character and social disposition. As a proof of Mr. Shaw's friendly feelings, knowing that I was very fond of one Van-hall's concerto, he never saw me at the theatre without selecting that piece for the next performance in the orchestra between the acts; and as I constantly expected it, I always remained to profit by his kindness.

The last time I ever saw Mr. Sheridan I overtook him in Oxford Street, leaning on his servant's arm. I joined him, and he dismissed his servant on a message, leaning on me till we reached the top of Bond Street. In the course of our walk I told him, that if he would accompany me to the place where I was then going, he would make an amiable and enlightened family happy. He asked me to whom I was going, and I told him I was to pass the evening at Mr. Shee's. Mr. Sheridan expressed his regret that some friends were to dine with him at his house in Saville Row: "But tell Mr. Shee," said he, "that I am unluckily engaged, and add, that I esteem him as a friend, honour him as poet, and love him as a countryman."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE late Dr. Bain, a truly amiable man and an acute and experienced physician, of whose friendship I was proud, and whose memory I revere, attended the last days of Mr. Sheridan, and when the sheriff's officers were sent by some unrelenting creditors to take Mr. Sheridan in custody, prohibited them from exercising their inhuman purpose on pain of being indicted for murder, as such an outrage in his present situation would certainly kill him, and they would only have his dead body to remove. The men were not so barbarous as to persevere, but retired. The doctor gave me an account of the last moments of Mr. Sheridan, and said that for a day or two before his death he was either too weak for utterance, or not disposed to make such an exertion. The doctor told him that the Bishop of London was in the house, and asked him if he would permit his lordship to repeat a short prayer by his bedside. Mr. Sheridan did not speak, but bowed assent. The bishop and the doctor then knelt by the bedside, when the former repeated a prayer, but the fervour of devotion rendered it much longer than the doctor expected. Mr. Sheridan appeared to be attentive during the whole. He closed his hands in the attitude of prayer, and bowed his head at every emphatic passage.

A few days previous to Mr. Sheridan's death the late Mr. Taylor Vaughan came to the house, and ad-

dressing Dr. Bain told him, as it was probable that Mr. Sheridan did not abound in money, he was commissioned to present him a draft upon Coutts's for 200*l.* adding that more was at his service if required. The doctor said, that, as he did not observe any appearance of want in the house, he could not take it without consulting Mrs. Sheridan. The lady, on hearing of this unexpected liberality, assured the doctor that she was fully sensible of the kindness of the donor, but must decline the intended donation, adding, that whatever the doctor might order for the relief of Mr. Sheridan should be fully supplied. The draft was then returned. It was understood that the draft was sent by his late Majesty, who had graciously enquired into the state of Mr. Sheridan, and was distinguished among the very few who were not indifferent to the fate of an old friend in his extremity.

It would be unjust to Lord Holland and Mr. Rogers, the admired poet, if it were not mentioned that they visited Mr. Sheridan during his last illness, and that on the application of the latter to Mr. Rogers, that gentleman sent to him a draft for 150*l.* in addition to previous pecuniary proofs of friendship. Lord Holland, however, insisted on paying half of that sum. As Mr. Moore has stated, on the funeral of Mr. Sheridan,

The splendid sorrows that adorned his hearse,
it is not necessary to add anything upon that subject in this place.

When the reports of Mr. Sheridan's illness became very alarming, a letter appeared in "The Morning Post," drawing the attention of Mr. Sheridan's friends to his melancholy situation, without mentioning his

name, but designating him in such terms as left no doubt to whom it related. The writer, citing the line above mentioned, concludes with the following passage: "I say *life* and *succour* against Westminster Abbey and a funeral." The letter was anonymous, but it is proper to state that it was written by Mr. Denis O'Bryen, a gentleman whose liberality generally exceeded his means, who was then not upon the most amicable terms with Mr. Sheridan, but who, as Mr. Moore says, "forgot every other feeling in a generous pity for his fate, and in honest indignation against those who now deserted him."

Mr. O'Bryen was favoured by the friendship of Mr. Canning, and I have had the pleasure of meeting that gentleman at the house of the former.

Mr. Sheridan, with all his great intellectual powers, was at times disposed to indulge in boyish waggery; and Mr. Richardson told me, that passing over Westminster Bridge with him, he had much difficulty in preventing him from tilting into the Thames a board covered with images, which an Italian had rested on the balustrades. Mr. Richardson had witnessed some playful exertions of this nature. He did so merely to excite surprise and fear in the owners, for he always amply indemnified them for any injury they might suffer.

Upon one occasion, when a nobleman, who had heard much of the talents of Mr. Richardson, had desired Mr. Sheridan to invite him to the country seat, where the latter was then on a visit, and had received a letter stating that Mr. Richardson was unable to come, Mr. Sheridan kept up the expectation of the master of the house, and left the room

pretending that he was going to write a letter. Having seen a good-looking man in the house, a visiter to the servants, Mr. Sheridan procured a suit of clothes belonging to the master of the house, had the man dressed in them, availed himself of the noise of a carriage, and formally introduced him as Mr. Richardson to the noble host. Mr. Sheridan had previously tutored the man not to speak, but to bow when anything was addressed to him. The company were struck with the rustic manner of the supposed Mr. Richardson, but thought that his conversation would amply compensate for any awkwardness in his deportment. The noble host was particularly attentive to his new guest, but, after many vain attempts to draw answers from him, he went to Sheridan, and expressing his disappointment observed, that if Mr. Richardson had not so high a reputation, he should have thought he was a very stupid fellow, and had never been used to good company. Sheridan said, "Wait till you see him at supper, when the wine has warmed him, and then you will find that he fully deserves all the fame which his talents have excited." The nobleman, however, induced others of the party to address the pseudo-Richardson, and all endeavoured, with the same ill-success, to draw forth his powers. They all therefore agreed in considering Mr. Richardson as one of the dullest men they had ever met with, and in astonishment that so discerning a judge as Mr. Sheridan should be such a bigot to friendship. At length supper was announced, and the company were less prepared to enjoy the luxuries of the table than to witness the brilliant sallies of Mr. Richardson. Sheridan, however, thought that he had carried

the joke far enough, and having contrived to get the countryman away, revealed his whimsical expedient, and by his own pleasantry atoned for the retirement of the rustic Richardson.

Another time, when he had engaged Charles Fox, Tickel, and Richardson, to take a late dinner with him at Putney, in a house lent to him, I believe, by the father of the late Mr. Canning, he persuaded Charles Fox to muffle himself in a great coat, and he did the same, when they went on horseback, Tickel and Richardson going in a post-chaise. The purpose was to hover near the chaise, and to make Tickel and Richardson fear they were in danger of being attacked by highwaymen. The night was dark and favoured the joke, otherwise the size of Charles Fox might have betrayed him. He must, indeed, have appeared like Falstaff, when concerned in the robbery at Gadshill.

Richardson told me that he was persuaded by Sheridan to accompany him to Putney, with the assurance that Mrs. Sheridan was anxious to see him, that he had promised to bring him, and that Mrs. Sheridan was preparing a nice supper for him according to his taste. Sheridan knew that Richardson, though not inordinately attached to the pleasures of the table, was not however indifferent to them, and therefore frequently on the road congratulated Richardson and himself on the good cheer which Mrs. Sheridan was preparing for them. When they reached Putney there was nothing in the house but bread and cheese, and about the fourth part of a bottle of port in the decanter, nor had Mr. Sheridan any credit in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Sheridan was certainly a good-natured man,

and capable of great fortitude when occasion required. When Drury Lane Theatre was destroyed by fire, the House of Commons adjourned, from motives of respect and sympathy, on account of the dreadful stroke which had fallen upon one of their distinguished members; contrary to the desire of Mr. Sheridan, who observed that the business of the country ought not to be interrupted and suspended by any private loss. The measure, however, having been adopted, Mr. Sheridan retired to the Piazza Coffee-house to a solitary dinner. Two of the principal actors of Covent Garden Theatre were dining together in a distant box, and having finished their repast, they agreed that it would be proper for them to approach Mr. Sheridan, and express their concern for the calamity which had happened. Hearing from them that they were going to observe the scene of devastation, he expressed his desire of going with them. They quitted the tavern, and mingled with the crowd, standing for some time at the end of the Piazza in Russell Street. Mr. Sheridan looked at the blazing ruin with the utmost composure. At length the gentlemen expressed their surprise that he could witness the destruction of his property with so much fortitude. His answer, which was recited to me by both of the gentlemen in identically the same words, was as follows: "There are but three things that should try a man's temper, the loss of what was the dearest object of his affections—that I have suffered; bodily pain, which, however philosophers may affect to despise it, is a serious evil—that I have suffered; but the worst of all is self-reproach—that, thank God, I never suffered!" The last of these declarations may be thought to

be rather repugnant to the course of his life, yet I think it will admit of a satisfactory solution, according to the opinion of my friend Richardson, who was a very penetrating man, and could sound the depth of character with the utmost sagacity.

It was the opinion of that gentleman, that Mr. Sheridan, before he was led into ambitious views, and tempted into the ensnaring vortex of fashionable life, had the most upright disposition; and he used to declare as his solemn conviction, that, if Sheridan could be touched by a talisman into a man of fortune, he would immediately become a man of integrity and nice honour. As everything relating to such a man as Mr. Sheridan cannot be wholly uninteresting, I may be permitted to mention the following circumstance.

I had dined with Mr. Richardson, and by desire of Mr. Sheridan he had promised to bring me with him at ten o'clock to the Shakspeare tavern, in Covent Garden, where Mr. Sheridan said he should dine privately for the purpose of writing some letters. We attended at the appointed time, and found that Mr. Sheridan had just closed his correspondence. He seemed to have roused himself into unusual activity, for he had written about thirty letters, which he tied up in a handkerchief, and then resigned himself to conversation. He immediately, according to the terms of his invitation, ordered burned bones and claret. Theatrical matters, without any politics, constituted the chief subject of conversation. In the course of the night, he lamented that he had not seen Mr. Garrick's performances as often as he might have done: "But," said he, "my father had often told me that he himself was the best living

actor, and, as I had seen my father perform very often, I had no great curiosity to witness an inferior. When, however, I saw Garrick, I was so struck with his wonderful powers, that I omitted no opportunity of attending his performances. He soon after observed, that Kemble was a very good actor, and that he thought even Garrick could not have performed Rolla so well. I ventured to ask him if this opinion did not savour of parental partiality in the author of that character. He contradicted this conjecture, and then I asked him if he would have written a monody on the death of Kemble. He said no, because Garrick was universally excellent, but that Kemble, whatever might be his merit, was limited in his genius.

Mr. Sheridan was averse to punning, to which I was perhaps at that time too much addicted, and resuming our conversation on Garrick, I asked which of Garrick's performances he thought the best? "Oh!" said he, "the *Lear*, the *Lear*." Indulging my usual habit, I could not forbear to observe, "No wonder you were fond of a *Leer*, since you married an *Ogle*." He then mentioned the name of a notorious punster of our acquaintance, and said it was too bad even for him. Mr. Richardson was very attentive to Mr. Sheridan, but spoke little. I believe many will envy me the conversation of two such men, which I enjoyed till three in the morning.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. RICHARDSON I had introduced to Dr. Monsey's table at Chelsea, and they were conversing on the subject of the universe; the doctor's manner of admitting the existence of a Supreme Being was in the following words, "I can't do without an intelligent agent." After all, what are the opinions of any human being? The wisest can only form his opinion on the opinions of others, and they must be wholly made up of the habits, prejudices, inclinations, and passions of each individual.

Monsey was an enemy to all forms, but was capable of very generous actions. He had a peculiar clock of a complicated description, which required a skilful workman, perfectly acquainted with its structure, to regulate its movements when necessary. For this purpose he became acquainted with a Mr. Barber, a watch-maker, who lived in Dean Street, Soho, to whom he gave five pounds a year for that service. On those occasions Barber used to dine with him, and I was one day of the party. When Barber was upon the steps performing his office on the clock, the doctor was sitting by the fire with his legs on the table, as he said he courted as much as he could the horizontal posture, in order to give less trouble to the blood in its travels through the body. While Barber was wholly absorbed in his business, Monsey said in a loud tone, "Barber, I don't believe you'll ever be able to pay me the 100*l.* that I lent to you."

Barber turned round, raised his spectacles on his forehead, and with ludicrous sincerity, as regular as the mechanism he had been handling, answered, "Why really, Doctor, I believe I never shall." "Well," rejoined the doctor, "if you cannot, I shall not ask for it." Neither of them was aware that any delicacy was necessary in the presence of a third person.

Another instance of Monsey's liberal disposition may tend to show that, however rough in manners, he was benevolent in his heart. Having heard that the late Mr. Windham, with whose father he had been intimate, had occasion for money at a particular period, Monsey called on him, and offered him the loan of any sum in his power, and for any period. Mr. Windham was surprised that Monsey had heard of his exigency, but accepted the loan of 500*l.* which was duly returned, but not without a struggle on the part of Monsey against receiving interest.

Mr. Windham's father was, by Monsey's account, a stout resolute man, fond of athletic exercises, which propensity his son partly inherited. The only blemish on the character of the son, was the cold unfeeling manner in which he spoke of Mr. Pitt, when the death of the latter was announced in the House of Commons, and a proposal was made for an adjournment on account of that melancholy event. But Mr. Windham was a fine, spirited, British character, and an able statesman.

The change in his character after he became conspicuous in politics, is not unworthy of notice. When Sheridan, who was intimate with him, was asked what sort of person he was, his answer was,

“Windham has a nice, delicate, refined, fastidious understanding.” Those, I remember, were his very words.

I was present at one of the annual celebrations at Chelsea Hospital (indeed at both) when Mr. Burke was paymaster, and the elder Mr. Boswell was present. The conversation turned upon Sir Joseph Mawbey. After some animadversion upon the peculiarities of that gentleman, and during a short pause among the company, Monsey said, “It is curious to contemplate the immense difference among human beings, beginning with Sir Isaac Newton, and descending to Sir Joseph Mawbey.” Boswell immediately said, “When you come to Sir Joseph, you are not far from the pigs,” (alluding to Sir Joseph’s business as a distiller.) “Yes,” said Burke, “it is worse than the *half-way-house*.” Young Burke, a delicate young man, added, “I have heard him called a pig of lead,” and then the subject ended. But after all, however politics might bias opinions, Sir Joseph Mawbey was considered by his friends as a public-spirited character, and a man of taste, and in the latter capacity has displayed his talents in many poetical effusions. But what will not party do to sour the temper and corrupt the judgment!

Sir George Howard was the Governor of Chelsea Hospital at that time, and instead of giving scope to the powers of Mr. Burke, he *bored* the company with old military stories that are generally known, and much better related in all printed narrations. But he was the presiding authority, and as “a dog’s obeyed in office,” even the eloquence of a Burke, the playful exuberance of a Boswell, and the learned

humour and odd eccentricities of a Monsey, were nullified by the garrulity of old age.

My admiration of Mr. Burke would induce me not to mention what passed previous to the dinner, if it did not tend to illustrate human nature, and to show that the greatest characters are not exempt from human weakness.

Mr. Burke, as Paymaster, had some accounts to settle with the officers of Chelsea Hospital before dinner. When they were settled, he had to pass about ten yards in the open air to the dinner-hall. He had not to pass through what might even be deemed a mist, but the moment he entered he desired some brandy to rub upon his elbow, as he feared he might otherwise suffer from cold. Every body was immediately on the alert to assist him. He pulled off his coat, (evidently a new one for the occasion,) gave the coat to one, pulled up his shirt sleeve, dipped his fingers into the cup with brandy held by another, and contrived to employ every one somehow or other all the time he rubbed his elbow. He, however, amused his volunteer servants with some jokes during the operation; and the sportive condescension of so great a man, he being also the Paymaster, seemed to be considered as a rich reward for their assiduity in his service.

I should not have mentioned this trifling incident, if it did not correspond with a similar circumstance which I had heard many years before upon unquestionable authority, and if it did not develope in some degree the private character of Mr. Burke. On some important debate which was expected in the House of Commons, Lord Rockingham was anxiously

waiting for Mr. Burke, in order to hear what had passed, and when from the knocking at the door he had reason to believe that Mr. Burke had arrived, the noble lord could not restrain his solicitude, but actually went down into the hall to question him before he quitted the sedan-chair which conveyed him. Mr. Burke, instead of answering his noble patron, acted exactly the part of the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, when the young lady is impatient to know what message the former had brought from her lover. Mr. Burke turned about in the sedan-chair, complained of the fatigue he had endured, declared that he was unable to answer, and kept Lord Rockingham in restless eagerness at the side of the chair, till Burke thought proper to quit it.

If this conduct, compared with the former instance, was not insolent pride, or at least gross affectation, to use the mildest term, it would be difficult to say what is. It may be asked what was Mr. Burke's motive; and perhaps it may be said, that people who rise in the world above their hopes, whatever may be their abilities, like to reduce their superiors, and to drive from their minds all humiliating recollections of their original condition. Such was the case with my father's old friend Hugh Kelly, who, instead of introducing ordinary names in his female comic characters, styled them Hortensias and Theodoras, and made one of his dramatic gentlemen address a letter to another by the name of Craggs Belville, Esq. as I have before observed. Poor Kelly could not help trying all expedients to efface every remembrance of the humility of his origin.

The admirers of great talents, and particularly of

Mr. Burke, can have no reason to be displeased with the record of these trifling incidents; as they not only serve to develope human nature, but to console mankind in general for the vast superiority of those who seem as if they belong to a higher order of beings, though they must participate in all the infirmities of their fellow-creatures.

There are, however, charges of a more serious kind which the pen of history will record, which cast an indelible stain upon the life of that illustrious statesman.

It is evident from Mr. Burke's character, that he did not possess the feelings of a liberal and gentlemanly mind. His conduct towards Mr. Hastings may be cited as a proof. It has been said that a great man struggling with adversity, is a sight worthy of the gods; and why? Because it is to be supposed that the gods would look on him with pity, and with a disposition to remove his sufferings. Who can deny that Mr. Hastings was a great man? and what could be a greater fall than, after having reigned with almost boundless authority in his Eastern government, to be reduced to the necessity of kneeling before a number of his fellow-creatures, and of receiving their permission to rise? Did Mr. Burke emulate the gods in his treatment of this great man in adversity? On the contrary, he treated him with the savage malignity of a fiend.

I remember, when I was one day present in the House of Lords during the impeachment, Mr. Burke, after uttering the most abusive epithets against Mr. Hastings, made some assertion, which affected the latter so strongly, that human patience was exhausted, and in an audible whisper he, in merely a word,

contradicted the virulent declaimer. Mr. Burke happened to hear him, and immediately turning round, exclaimed with vehemence, "I care not what is said by the culprit at the bar; he is in the condition of an ordinary culprit, who, when the officers of justice are conducting him through the streets to prison, insults every person who comes near him as he passes." This brutal insult seemed to excite general disgust, but that feeling did not mitigate the rancour of Mr. Burke.

I was present at this scene of brutality, and was shocked to see the indifference with which Mr. Burke appeared to treat the general sentiments of the assembly, who seemed indignantly and deeply to feel the pitiable situation of the victim of his persecution.

The following article I recently saw in a public newspaper, and I insert it literally in this place, to justify my opinion of Mr. Burke, not having the least doubt that it was founded on fact:—"The celebrated Edmund Burke was one of the members appointed by the House of Commons to enforce the charges of crime against Mr. Warren Hastings, and one day when he had been pouring out all his splendid talents in a rich display of oratory against the accused, he addressed the assembly of peers, ladies, and gentlemen, in the following terms: "When I look round this glorious circle, bright with all that is high in rank, all that is powerful in talent, all that is amiable in virtue, all that is brilliant in beauty, and then turn my eyes to the criminal at the bar, my mind is convulsed with horror, and I sicken at the sight." The orator then placed his hands on the table before him, and dropped his head into

them, as if overwhelmed by the dreadful contemplation.

On coming out of Westminster Hall after this splendid oration, Burke could not find his carriage, and Lord Yarborough's having just drawn up, the peer offered to take him home. The ebullition of Burke's mind had not subsided, and on the way, without considering the indelicacy of appealing to one who was ultimately to pronounce judgment on the case, he proceeded to re-urge the arguments on his noble auditor, concluding with the eager inquiry, "Do you not think this man a great criminal?" Lord Yarborough, whose correctness of intellect was known to all who had the opportunity of knowing him, immediately answered, "Burke, all I can say at present is, that either you or Hastings deserve to be hanged, but I cannot now tell which of the two." This answer is as honourable to the noble lord, as it is disgraceful to the person who gave occasion to it. But the whole persecution of Mr. Hastings arose from party feelings, if not wholly from the vindictive rancour of Mr. Burke.

Mr. Cooke, a native of Cork, and a barrister-at-law, who came to this country in the year 1766, with letters of recommendation to the two Burkes, to Oliver Goldsmith, and other distinguished persons of that day, was particularly well acquainted with the characters of Edmund and Richard Burke, and he spoke of them with severe reprobation. He said that he was once induced to accept a bill for the latter of forty pounds, to pay for some wine which the Burkes had jointly consumed. Richard Burke kept out of the way, and Cooke was threatened with arrest for the forty pounds, when he had not

forty shillings at command. Feeling for his situation, the holder of the bill agreed to wait till Cooke had made application to Edmund Burke, that he might induce his brother to honour the bill. Edmund at first said that it was his brother's concern, though he had partaken of the wine; but when Cooke, who at that time subsisted by his connexion with newspapers, and was a proprietor of one, threatened to make the matter public, Mr. Burke desired that he would send the creditor to him, and he would arrange the matter one way or other. Cooke did so, and never heard any more of the business.

Mr. Cooke, whose veracity I had no reason to distrust, after an intercourse of nearly forty years, assured me that he always considered the impeachment of Mr. Hastings as the result of personal rancour on the part of Mr. Burke, the reason of which has been already noticed.

Mr. Burke, with all his talents, all his knowledge, and all the splendour of his reputation, had but a vulgar mind. What must be thought of the mere taste of a man, who spoke of Mr. Hastings "falling from his high estate," when he was in helpless submission before him, in the following terms: "He lay down in his sty of infamy, wallowing in the filth of disgrace, and fattened upon the offals and excrements of dishonour."

Mr. Burke's pamphlet against the late Duke of Bedford, was written more in the style of a carcase-butcher than of a gentleman. The Duke had objected to the grant of an enormous pension to Mr. Burke, and what were the merits that deserved it? His bill for the reduction of the national expenditure went upon abuses, the growth of time and negli-

gence, which were generally mentioned, and which national wisdom and national necessity would have "known without a prompter," and would no doubt in due season have corrected. I do not pretend to be much of a politician, but presume to say, nevertheless, of his famous "Reflections on the French Revolution," a work of more importance to society than any of his other compositions, that there was a great parade of speculative reasoning on those political theories of the French usurpers, which were too likely to be transient in duration, to call for such elaborate discussion and excursive declamation.

I remember, soon after the publication of this work, I had the pleasure of dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds at his house in Leicester Square, and the convivial disposition of the elder Mr. Boswell, who had not received his due proportion of wine, obliged the great artist to give us a supper. The party at dinner consisted of the late Lord Stowell, then Sir William Scott; the late Mr. Courtenay, the Irish wit of the House of Commons; the elder Mr. Boswell; a nephew of Dr. Robertson, the historian; and myself. After dinner, cards were introduced, and at the end of a few rubbers, Sir William and Mr. Courtenay retired, leaving Mr. Boswell, Dr. Robertson's nephew, and myself. It was my wish to follow the example of those gentlemen and retire, not to break in upon the regular habits of our host, lest I should preclude myself from the chance of a future invitation to so very agreeable a society; but Mr. Boswell assured me that Sir Joshua had ordered a supper from respect to the young Scotsman's uncle, and that I should be thought ungracious in leaving him to entertain a total stranger. I therefore re-

mained without reluctance, as I wished as much as possible, consistently with propriety, to prolong my intercourse with our courteous, well-bred, and intelligent host.

In the course of the supper, Mr. Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution" happening to become a topic of conversation, I ventured to observe that I thought if Dr. Johnson had been alive, and had written on the subject, he would not have devoted so much time to the examination of evanescent theories, but would have treated the matter with a deeper knowledge of human nature, and more philosophical energy. Sir Joshua did not agree with me, but spoke highly of the work as a masterly effusion of political eloquence. With the highest respect for the judgment of the great artist, it may not be improper to observe, that he was a shrewd practical politician. It was a maxim with him, that praises of the dead were useless, and ought to be avoided when they were likely to offend the living. That the dead were nothing and the living everything. His policy therefore would probably have been puzzled, if Johnson had been living, and had employed his great powers on the same subject.

With respect to the rumour that Burke was Junius, it is certain that many passages in the letters of that spirited writer strongly resemble passages in Burke, but the general style of the two authors seems to preclude the possibility of Burke's being able to reduce his expansive, flowery declamation to the systematic, terse, condensed, emphatic, pointed and sarcastic manner of the Great Unknown, under the shadow of a mighty name. Dr. Kelly, of Finsbury Square, has brought the suspicion nearer to

Burke than any preceding writer ; though Mr. Taylor the intelligent bookseller, has certainly raised a strong presumption in favour of the pretensions of Sir Philip Francis. Independently, however, of the difficulty of believing that Sir Philip had talents sufficient for the work, the dates of some of the letters, and the situation of Sir Philip at the time of publication, render it a matter of impossibility. Perhaps, if the author were known, the charm would be dispelled ; but if he himself is to be believed, he never can be known, for he says, "I am the sole depository of my own secret, and it shall perish with me." So that if it were ever to be really developed, it could not excite any confidence in opposition to the solemn declaration of the author.

As the question of who was the author of Junius will be an interesting one as long as literature shall exist, I may be permitted to prolong the subject. It is evident that Junius was as artful as he was ingenious, intelligent, and eloquent. Though no man might more properly be trusted than my worthy old friend Mr. H. S. Woodfall, yet, as there could be no reason for trusting him, when Junius says that Mr. Woodfall may sometime know him, and asked him to tell candidly if he guesses who he was, Junius is playing a trick, for he must have been conscious that he was wrapped in impenetrable mystery. And when he says that he had been governed by other people, in writing contrary to his opinion upon a particular subject, he either forgot the declaration of his impenetrable secrecy, or again practised an artifice for some secret purpose.

Some persons are born with a genius for artifice, as well as others for poetry, painting, music, &c.

and Junius was one of the number. It is curious to observe the different manner in which he first speaks of our estimable monarch George the Third, and that in which he afterwards treats him. In his first letter he says, "When our gracious Sovereign ascended the throne, we were a flourishing and a contented people. If the personal virtues of a king could have insured the happiness of his subjects, the scene could not have altered so entirely as it has done. The idea of uniting all parties, of trying all characters, and distributing the offices of state by rotation, was gracious and benevolent to an extreme, though it has not yet produced the many salutary effects which were intended by it. To say nothing of the wisdom of such a plan, it undoubtedly arose from an unbounded goodness of heart, in which folly had no share. It was not a capricious partiality to new faces; it was not a natural turn for low intrigues; nor was it the treacherous amusement of double and triple negotiations. No, Sir, it arose from a continued anxiety in the purest of all possible hearts for the general welfare."

After this high eulogium on the royal character, we find Junius representing the same excellent monarch as one of the worst men in his dominions, and for no other reason than that he did not adopt the measures recommended by Junius.

The same inconsistency is observable respecting Wilkes. In his eighth letter, addressed to the Duke of Grafton, he says, referring to Wilkes, "Now, my lord, let me ask you, has it never occurred to your grace, while you were withdrawing this desperate wretch, M'Quirk, from that justice which the laws had awarded, and which the whole people of England

demanded against him, that there is another man, *who is the favourite of his country*, whose pardon would have been accepted with gratitude, whose pardon *would have healed all our divisions?* Have you quite forgotten that this man was once your grace's friend?"

In his letter to the King, he speaks of Wilkes as "A man not very honourably distinguished in the world," whom he had before described as "the favourite of his country"—"whose pardon would have healed all our divisions." And in the same letter he says, "Pardon this man the remainder of his punishment, and if resentment still prevails, make it, what it should have been long since, an act, not of mercy, but contempt. He will soon fall back to his natural station—a silent senator, and hardly supporting the weekly eloquence of a newspaper. The gentle breath of peace would leave him on the surface, neglected and unmoved. It is only the tempest that lifts him from his place."—"The favourite of his country!!"

Junius accused his Majesty of having "affectedly renounced the name of Englishman," because his Majesty George the Third, had said that he gloried in having been "born a Briton," meaning to use conciliatory language towards the people of "Great Britain" in general, and not to pay any peculiar compliment to those of the north. This is an insinuation unworthy of Junius.

CHAPTER XV.

VOLTAIRE. This author, in his interesting *Life of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden*, relates the extraordinary visit of that monarch to the Elector Augustus at Dresden, before the former left Saxony, in a manner very different from what I heard it described by Dr. Monsey, who heard it from the Earl of Peterborough himself. Voltaire states, that while the King was in his camp at Altranstad, he was receiving ambassadors from almost all the princes in Christendom. The Earl of Peterborough was at that time on a visit to the Swedish monarch, and he related the visit in the following manner:

“I had dined with the king in his tent,” said his lordship. “He despatched his dinner in a few moments, and then left me to finish mine at my leisure, throwing himself upon a sofa, and reading in an old bible, with brass clasps and hinges. As soon as I had finished my repast, which I hastened in imitation of his majesty, the king asked me if I was inclined to take a ride. As every thing that a king desires, should, I thought, be complied with, at least in matters of that kind, I readily assented. After riding a few miles, we came near to a fortified town, which, as far as I recollected, seemed to me to be Dresden. I asked the king if I was right. He replied in the affirmative, and said he was going to pay a visit to Augustus. I was quite in a state of

consternation, and lost in wonder at what would be the result of this singular expedition, after he had deprived the Elector of Saxony of the throne of Poland, and otherwise treated him with great severity.

“When the king entered the court-yard of the palace, attended by me and a slight guard, he was immediately known by an old Slavonian, who had served under him in Sweden. The man immediately gave the alarm, and all was bustle and confusion in the palace. Charles dismounted, and at once entered the palace, desiring to see the elector, who immediately appeared, and after a few words asked him to dine with him, and me also, when I was announced. A repast was hastily prepared, and we sat at the table. The first dish was soup, and while the king was lifting the spoon to his mouth there was a great noise on the stairs, resembling the clatter of arms. I observed that, as soon as he heard the noise, he shifted his spoon into his left hand, and instantly put his right hand on his sword. The noise was soon discovered to be nothing but the jostling of silver dishes, and then he cautiously shifted his spoon to his right hand. The repast was soon ended, when he took his leave, and there was great courtesy on both sides.

“As we were returning, we met a large body of Swedish troops, headed by one of his favourite generals, who, thinking his sovereign had been surprised and made prisoner, were advancing to rescue him from his enemies. Finding that all was safe, they returned, after receiving the royal thanks for their zeal and promptitude. As we returned, I could

not help telling the king that I noticed his conduct at the table when the noise occurred, observing that, however brave and skilful he might be, he could not have contended against numbers. He said in answer, that had any armed men entered the room, he had resolved first to cut down Augustus, and then leave the rest to fate and fortune."

This account is more characteristic of the monarch than that of Voltaire, and as well as I can recollect, Dr. Monsey told me that he either received it from Lord Peterborough himself, or Dr. Freind, who wrote an apology for his lordship; but as Dr. Monsey knew both, it is probable he had the authority of both.

Charles the Twelfth was the favourite hero of Dr. Monsey, who used to say that though he was a coward himself, he always loved bravery. He told me that while he was in Norfolk, some foreigners visited the place with a puppet-show, and among them was an old Livonian soldier, who had served under the King of Sweden. Anxious to know something of his favourite hero, the doctor asked the man if he could recollect anything respecting him. The man said all he could remember was, that a bomb-shell once burst very near to them both, and that he ran some paces away, but the king remained on the spot. Charles called to him, and asked him why he ran, and the man answered that he was afraid of the bomb. The king made no reply, but the man added that he saw him lift his hands, and heard him say to himself, "Would I knew what fear is!"

As this anecdote was not likely to be the invention of an ignorant old soldier, it may be received as a genuine trait of the character of the Alexander of

the north.* After all, Charles was a savage hero. He cared nothing for the lives of his soldiers when his own ambition was concerned, however desperate his situation, or how many soever were "*killed off*," to use an expression of the late Mr. Windham, not much to the honour of his feelings. Charles's treatment of Patkul was an act of monstrous cruelty, which nothing but insanity could palliate. It was an act of deliberate ferocity that will always stamp an odium on his character. His behaviour also to the Turks at Bender, was characterised by ingratitude, folly, and even madness. How would he have felt if he could have peeped into the book of fate, and have seen the throne of his heroic ancestors occupied by a subaltern of a revolutionary French army!

FRANCIS NEWBERY, ESQ. With this gentleman I became acquainted through the medium of my friend Sir Francis Freeling, who married his daughter. He was a scholar and a poet, and also a musician, or rather a lover of music, for as an instrumental performer I am not acquainted with his skill. He was a great admirer of Dr. Crotch, whose taste, judgment, and professional skill, are well known. Mr. Newbery made many translations of the classical authors, particularly Horace, in which, as far as I can presume to judge, he fully entered into the spirit of the author. He also wrote many original compositions, which were set to music by Dr. Crotch and his other friend Mr. William Shield, whose moral

* Voltaire relates a similar event, and probably it may be the same, though without Charles's exclamation, which was not likely to be heard, except by the soldier who was so near to him.

qualities and professional talents he held in the highest esteem. He was also very much attached to the late Mr. Bartleman, the admirable classical singer, as he may fairly be styled, since his manner of singing was at once learned and impressive.

Mr. Newbery kindly invited me to his private and select concerts at his house in St. Paul's Churchyard, where the charms of music, and his lively and intelligent conversation, constituted an exquisite repast. His amiable and accomplished daughter was the second wife of the present Sir Francis Freeling, and a more pleasing, unaffected, and intelligent lady I never knew. Mr. Newbery was the son of the eminent and respectable bookseller, who purchased a partnership in the celebrated fever powders of his friend Dr. James, and sold them in conjunction with the doctor's son for many years, till some untoward circumstance divided them. Mr. Newbery was very playful in conversation, as well as judicious and erudite, and though reputed to be a good scholar, was perfectly free from an ostentatious display of learning, but seemed chiefly anxious to excite conviviality and good humour.

Mr. Newbery, not long before his death, unluckily perhaps for both parties, separated from his partner in the sale of Dr. James's medicines, a circumstance which induced me to write a poetic trifle, which I shall not insert in this place, satisfied that it received the approbation of my friend the late Francis Newbery, whose friendship was an honour.

ANDREW BAIN, M.D. This gentleman was a member of the College of Physicians, and one of the most eminent practitioners in London. Before he settled in London, he acquired a high reputation at

Bristol Hot Wells. He had attended the first wife of Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan with so much kindness, assiduity, and solicitude, that on the death of that accomplished lady at that place, Mr. Sheridan, though by no means in affluent circumstances, sent to him a hundred pounds, enclosed in a letter, expressive of respect and gratitude,—a proof, as I have before said, that Mr. Sheridan only wanted the means to be just, honourable, and benevolent.

Dr. Bain, by all accounts, was a profound and elegant scholar, of which he gave ample proofs in some Latin dissertations on medical subjects. The doctor had a son and two daughters. The son I had the pleasure of knowing. He was bred to the church, and had a living at about the distance of a mile from his father's residence at Heffleton, in Devonshire; and this contiguity of the benefice enabled the family to be almost as often together as if they inhabited the same mansion, and a more happy family never existed. The son was learned and affectionate, and the daughters highly amiable and accomplished. In the midst of this cordial felicity, a disastrous event occurred; Mr. Bain and a Mr. Bosanquet were taking an excursion on an adjacent river, when the boat was overturned, and both gentlemen perished. To augment the calamity, this melancholy catastrophe happened within the sight of the two sisters, who were walking near the spot. It would be impossible to describe the misery of the father when he heard the lamentable tidings; he never was able to recover his spirits, and died within a few years after this fatal deprivation.

Another calamity happened in the family a few years after. Dr. Bain's sister was married to Mr.

Hardie, a gentleman who held a situation in the East India House, in which he conducted himself with so much propriety, that on his retirement he not only enjoyed a liberal pension, but was presented with a large sum for his faithful and useful services. This gentleman's foot happening to slip as he was going up stairs, he fell backwards, and was killed on the spot. I knew him well; he was amiable, intelligent, and good-humoured. His widow, whom I have the pleasure of knowing, felt an irreparable and inconsolable loss by the death of this worthy man, but her piety and benevolence enabled her to sustain it with fortitude. By her intimate connexion with her brother, and his kind attention and instructions, she possesses great medical knowledge and judgment, and by her good sense and experience, she is an agreeable and instructive companion.

Before Dr. Bain retired from his profession, and settled at his seat in Devonshire, he invited me to dine with him, for the purpose of introducing me to Mr. Charles Sheridan, the son of Mr. R. B. Sheridan, as one of the old friends of his father. Mr. Charles Sheridan inherits in a great degree the talents of his father. He has travelled into Greece, and has published a very intelligent tract upon the present situation of that country, and on the hopes, expectations, and prospects of the descendants of its ancient sages, heroes, and poets, whose history, real and fabulous, will always render them the delight of mankind.

The late MR. CHRISTIE. With this gentleman, who was fully entitled to that designation, I had the pleasure of being acquainted many years, and a more

respectable character I never knew. Besides being possessed of an excellent understanding, which would probably have enabled him to make a distinguished figure in any walk of life, I should venture to say that he was peculiarly fitted for the profession which he adopted. There was something interesting and persuasive, as well as thoroughly agreeable in his manner. He was very animated, and it may be justly said, eloquent, in his recommendation of any article that he announced from his "Rostrum," as well as in occasional effusions of genuine humour. He was courteous, friendly, and hospitable in private life, and was held in great esteem by his numerous friends, among whom there were many of high rank.

It was reported, and I believe truly, that he lost considerable property by his confidence in Mr. Chace Price, a gentleman well-known in the upper circles of his time, and more admired for his wit and humour than for the strictness of his moral principles. It was understood that Mr. Christie's loss by this gentleman amounted to about five thousand pounds; and this event afforded an additional proof of the generous feelings of Mr. Garrick, who, hearing of the loss and of the high character of Mr. Christie, though but little acquainted with him, with great delicacy offered to accommodate him with the full amount of his loss, if his consequent situation rendered such assistance necessary or expedient. Whether Mr. Christie had occasion to avail himself of this liberal offer, I know not, but that it was tendered is certainly true, and it corresponds with the testimony in favour of Mr. Garrick's benevolent dis-

position, as given by Dr. Johnson, by Mr. Smith the actor, in several of his letters to me, and by my late friend Mr. Arthur Murphy.

Though Murphy was very often involved in dramatic squabbles with Garrick, and used to speak of him in very harsh terms, yet he always admitted that he was the greatest actor in the world, and also that he was benevolent and generous in private life.

As a proof of the estimation in which Mr. Christie's character was held, particularly by the great Earl of Chesterfield, a nobleman distinguished for his intellectual powers and knowledge of mankind, as well as for the polish of his manners, I relate the following fact, which was told to me by my late esteemed friend Sir Francis Bourgeois. Mr. Christie had a particularly valuable collection of pictures to dispose of, most of which were of very high reputation abroad. Anxious that this collection should be distinguished from those of less celebrity, he waited upon the Earl of Chesterfield, to whom he had the honour of being known. It happened that the earl had seen many of the pictures in question during his travels. Mr. Christie told his lordship how anxious he was that these pictures should excite the attention which they deserved, and he requested that his lordship would condescend to look at them. His lordship promised to attend the public view, and gave Mr. Christie leave to announce his intention among his friends, or wherever he thought proper, and in order to give *éclat* to the occasion he promised to come in state. On the day appointed, therefore, the room was crowded in the expectation of seeing this venerable and celebrated nobleman, who arrived in a coach

and six with numerous attendants. The company gave way and afforded a convenient space for his lordship. He was attended by Mr. Christie, who took the liberty of directing his lordship's attention to some pictures, and requested to be favoured with his opinion of the chief productions in the room. The earl, who came merely to serve Mr. Christie, spoke in high terms of several of the pictures which he had seen on his travels, and also of others pointed out to him by Mr. Christie, as if they were equally recollected by him. The auditors pressed as near as respect for his lordship would permit them, in order to hear and circulate his opinions. After remaining in the room till the purpose of his visit was fully accomplished, to the gratification of the company, his lordship, gracefully bowing, retired in the same state, accompanied to his carriage by Mr. Christie; and the result was, that the additional reputation which the collection acquired by his lordship's condescension in supporting this ingenious expedient, enabled Mr. Christie to sell it to the best advantage. It need not to be observed, that if Mr. Christie had not been held in much esteem by his lordship, the earl would hardly have been induced to act this kind and condescending part in his favour. It may not improperly be said that Lord Chesterfield himself derived some advantage on this occasion; for in addition to his high character as a statesman and a wit, it also gave him the reputation of a judicious connoisseur, as well as that of a condescending patron.

I remember calling on Mr. Christie one morning, just before he was going into his great room to dispose of an estate. Always alive to the interest of his employers, he requested that I would act as a

bidder. I observed, that if any of my friends happened to be present they would laugh if they saw me come forward on such an occasion, and that, as it would be totally new to me, I should commit some blunder. He however repeated his request, and I assented. It happened as I apprehended, for I made a bidding beyond that of a *bona fide* purchaser, who would go no farther, and the estate was knocked down to me. I apologised for my blundering ignorance, which Mr. Christie treated with his usual good-nature and affability, and insisted on my staying to dine with the family.

Mr. Christie was loyal and firm in his political principles, and moral and just in his private conduct. I have not only had the pleasure of dining with him at his own house, but of meeting him at other tables, where he was treated with the respect and attention to which he was fully entitled by his good sense, general intelligence, and courteous demeanour. He had two sons, one of whom went in a military character to the East Indies, where, I understand, he died in the service of his country. He was a very fine young man.

Of the present Mr. Christie, who inherits the profession and the disposition of his father, it is proper that I should speak with reserve, lest I should offend his delicacy by what his diffidence might consider as unmerited panegyric; nor is it necessary, as he has obliged the world with some publications which not only demonstrate his learning, judgment, and deep research, but which are marked by unaffected piety. Indeed, I heard that he was educated for the church, of which, from his classical attainments and the purity of his morals, he would doubtless have proved

a distinguished ornament. He holds a very high rank in his profession, and is mentioned with great respect by all his competitors. I have long had the pleasure of being acquainted with him, and number him among the most valuable of my friends. It is with pleasure I add, that he is favoured with the friendship of many persons of high rank, as well as with many of the most learned and enlightened members of the church. The late Mr. Christie had been twice married. His son is the issue of his first marriage, and his widow is living with a respectable competency.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE late SIR HOME POPHAM, and the late SIR THOMAS BOULDEN THOMPSON, were among my juvenile friends. The talents and valour of Sir Home are well known to the world at large, but it is not equally known that with all his ardour for his profession, and his skill in naval tactics, evident in some signals which he invented, and which I understood were highly approved, he was a good general scholar. I once wrote a poetical epitaph on a late great admiral of merited professional eminence, but of a stern, vindictive, and unrelenting character, a copy of which was often requested by some of my naval and other friends, but from a regard to my own personal security always refused. It was, however, so eagerly desired, that I was often requested to read it in company, and therefore at

that time generally carried a copy in my pocket. On one occasion, after I had read it, a friend endeavoured to snatch it from me, and his wife knowing his wishes, made the same attempt; but as their hands struck against each other, I was able to rescue my manuscript, and from that time I only carried the first word of each line, relying upon my memory for the rest, and used to repeat the whole without the danger of a seizure.

Sir Home Popham used to call on me occasionally to hear it, and one morning while I was reading it to him, I observed that he was writing during the time on a piece of paper before him, and apprehending that he was taking my lines in short-hand, I stopped, and looking at what he was about, found that he was actually taking it in Greek characters to disarm my suspicion.

I may be thought extremely vain in thus recording my trifle, but I may appeal to my old and worthy friend Sir Francis Hartwell, whose friendship I have the pleasure to retain, whether such was not its influence at the time. Sir Home Popham's friendship with me continued to his death, by which I lost a valuable companion, and the nation a gallant and able officer. And now for a proof of the uncertainty of friendship.

I was equally intimate with, and attached to Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson. He was the reputed nephew of Captain Thompson, generally called Commodore Thompson, a gentleman of agreeable manners and well-known literary talents. He was the author of many admired compositions in verse and prose; and he published a correct and valuable edition of the works of Andrew Marvel, proving that

the well-known ballad of "Margaret's Ghost" was written by that sturdy and disinterested patriot, and not by Mallet, who usurped the reputation; as also that admirable hymn beginning with

The glorious firmament on high,
which Addison introduced into "The Spectator," without claiming the merit of writing it, but nevertheless, leaving the world to consider it as his composition.

Sir Thomas told me more than once, that though he was generally reputed to be the nephew of Captain Thompson, he knew of no other father,—a proof, at least, that the Captain had been a truly affectionate uncle. Sir Thomas during our early acquaintance resided at Epsom, and was frequently in the habit of sending me game. He often said, that if he ever became an admiral, I should be his secretary, if no better prospect offered. After his gallant and skilful conduct at the battle of the Nile, he again resided at Epsom, and I remember that when he sent me a hare, in returning my thanks I said in my letter, that I should think I was eating a lion, and hoped that it would inspire me with such valour as he had displayed in the service of his country.

When he called on me after the battle of Copenhagen, and I saw his wooden leg, I could not help shedding tears to see a friend so disabled, but forcing a smile, I said, "There's now an end to my secretaryship." "Why so?" said he; "if I am again employed as an admiral, I shall keep my promise." He soon after became Comptroller of the Navy Board, and meeting him at the Admiralty, I asked if he could give any situation to compensate for my disappointment as secretary. He told me that he had

no power, as the Admiralty engrossed all the patronage; and from that time our friendship ended. When I met him afterwards, he gave me a slight bow, and at last we used to pass each other as if we had never been acquainted. I could not but regret that so manly a character, and so gallant and able an officer, was not superior to the pride which arose from his gradual elevation, and the consequent disparity of my condition. Alas! for poor human nature!

MR. FRANKS. This gentleman, whom I knew many years ago, was of the Jewish persuasion, but with a truly Christian disposition. He was, I believe, a merchant before I knew him, but had retired from business, and resided at Mortlake. He was so highly esteemed in that village and the neighbourhood, that he was chosen churchwarden, an office which he willingly assumed and discharged in such a manner, as fully to confirm and augment the reputation he had acquired. He was very fond of music, and a good judge of musical performers. I heard him relate the following anecdote, at the table of my old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck.

Mr. Franks said, that an admirable performer, named Dupuis, came from Paris with an introduction to him as a patron of music; that Dupuis was one of the finest, if not the best, performer on the violin he had ever heard. His talents soon procured him an introduction into the best societies, and the patronage which he experienced enabled him to live in a very splendid manner. After acquiring a high reputation and good connexions, he was suddenly missed, and nobody could tell what had become of him. A few years passed and his skill was not forgotten,

nor curiosity as to his fate much abated. At length Mr. Franks had almost ceased to remember and to inquire about him. Happening to pass through the place where May Fair was formerly held, at the fair-time, he heard the sound of a violin in a common public-house, where a show was exhibited. Struck by the admirable skill of the performance, he ventured into the house, and immediately recognized his old favourite Dupuis, who knew him also, but did not affect to conceal himself. When he had concluded his solo, Dupuis, who had been so great a beau, and who then was attired in a very shabby garb, like a low workman, retired into a back-room with Mr. Franks, and addressed him as follows:—“My old and esteemed friend, you may naturally wonder to see me in such a place and in such humble attire, but the secret is this, I am in love with the daughter of the man who is exhibiting a show in this house, and while I appear on a level with herself, I have some chance of her favour, but if I were to appear like a gentleman, all my hopes would be at an end, and her smiles would be transferred to some vulgar rival. But I begin to be disgusted with this degrading state; I shall try my fortune with the family a few days longer, then assume my former rank in society, and you shall be the first person to whom I shall pay my respects.”

Mr. Franks said that he was of course satisfied with this explanation, and parted from him not surprised at the transformations which love produces in gods, according to the poets, as well as men, and confidently expected to see Dupuis in a few days, after he had conquered or gratified his passion. But no Dupuis appeared, and Mr. Franks therefore went

to the public-house, in order to discover some clue to him. The fair had been ended some days, and the landlord could not give any information respecting the amorous minstrel, nor did Mr. Franks ever hear of him again. Judging from his altered manners, as well as his mean attire, Mr. Franks inferred that he had sunk in life, that he had become reconciled to the grovelling condition to which he was reduced, but that his story was a mere pretence, as he saw no beauty there that could be supposed to ensnare him. Mr. Franks concluded with saying, that Dupuis had no occasion to withdraw himself from creditors, as his talents provided him the power of living like a gentleman.

MR. JOHN REEVES. The country, in my humble opinion, was deeply indebted to this gentleman, who came resolutely forward at a very critical period, when certain aspiring demagogues were attempting to introduce the revolutionary principles of France into England, and when the language of some of the public journals strongly abetted their rebellious intentions. At this momentous crisis, he stood forth as the champion of the British Constitution. He convened a meeting of loyal men, and formed a committee at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand, for the purpose of circulating tracts to counteract the insidious and anarchical principles of revolutionary France. This loyal society held frequent meetings at that tavern, and disseminated innumerable pamphlets, calculated to refute the sophistical doctrines of the French orators, and our democratical writers, and to guard the British people against the impending danger. My late friends Mr. John Bowles, and Mr. William Combe, were

the authors of many of these pamphlets, which were widely diffused at the expense of the committee at the Crown and Anchor Tavern.

Mr. Bowles published a tract, written with great vigour and elegance, which he entitled "A Protest against Paine." Mr. Combe wrote another, entitled "A Word in Season;" and also, "Plain Thoughts of a Plain Man, with a word, *en passant*, to Mr. Erskine," afterwards Lord Erskine, who had been ensnared by French doctrines, and had published a pamphlet in support of their principles. Mr. Reeves also at the same period published his four letters, addressed to the quiet good sense of the people of England. They were written with great vigour, sound reasoning, and contained much historical illustration. Perhaps he treated too lightly the hereditary and representative branches of the British Constitution, but he powerfully maintained that it was founded on the basis of monarchy.

Mr. Sheridan hastily condemned these letters, and instigated a prosecution against the author, who, however, was acquitted by the laws of the land. It is to be regretted that Mr. Sheridan came forward so indiscreetly on this occasion, as on other points in which his party had supported dangerous measures, he acted with an independent spirit, and was styled "the glorious exception." He was too indolent, and too prone to personal indulgences, to have studied the constitution with the zeal and assiduity with which Mr. Reeves explored its nature, and became profoundly conversant with its essential principles.

Mr. Reeves was the author of many legal and political tracts, and was through life distinguished

for zealous loyalty. He was at Westminster School, and afterwards at the University of Oxford, at the time when Mr. Combe was at the latter place. Mr. Reeves was very rich and very liberal. He adopted the son of his friend Mr. Brown, an old fellow collegian, supported him in his own house, and took the trouble of teaching him Greek. The boy, however, proved a dissipated and worthless character, and was thrown into the Fleet Prison by his creditors. Mr. Reeves released him at the expense of 1500*l.*, and took him again into favour; he died soon after, but if he had lived and reformed, he would probably have inherited the bulk of Mr. Reeves's large fortune.

I must here say something more of my friend Mr. JOHN BOWLES. I had the pleasure of being acquainted with him very early in life, and always found him firmly loyal and honourable. We both at the same time frequented an oratorical club, styled the Robin Hood Society, held in Butcher Row, Strand. Mr. Bowles, who was then preparing himself for the bar, often spoke at that place, and was heard with respect. My other old friend, the present Mr. Justice Garrow, who had then the same views, was also one of the most distinguished orators at that society, and powerfully displayed those talents which have since rendered him so conspicuous at the bar, and raised him to his present well-merited elevation.

Before our time the president of the society had been a Mr. Jacocks, a baker, in Soho. He was a man of profound sagacity. After the several speakers had delivered their sentiments, he summed up the arguments of the whole, and concluded with declaring his own opinion upon the subject in discussion; and always received the warm acclamations of

the audience. The great Earl of Chesterfield frequently attended this society *incog.*, attracted chiefly by the abilities of the president, whom, I have heard it said, he pronounced to be fit for a prime minister. My father, who was well acquainted with the abilities of Mr. Jacocks, though not personally known to him, once pointed him out to me in the street. I recollect him well, and never saw a more venerable figure. His house is still occupied by a baker, and is situated very near Monmouth Street.

Mr. Bowles, conceiving that the danger, though suspended, was not at an end, continued to publish many works in support of the British constitution; but at length, modestly thinking that his name was too often before the public, sent forth his latter works anonymously. He was appointed one of the Dutch Commissioners, and devoted his time to the investigation and arrangement of that complicated subject in discussion. The commissioners were charged with unnecessary delay, and even of deriving undue pecuniary advantages from a prolongation of the inquiry, but Mr. Bowles came forward in defence of himself and colleagues, and published a satisfactory vindication.

In justice to a gentleman named Jennings, who brought the charges, it is proper to mention, that he also published a pamphlet, in which he liberally acknowledged that he was mistaken, and had proceeded upon erroneous grounds.

Mr. Bowles was very intimate with Mr. Reeves and Mr. George Chalmers, and I had several times the pleasure of accompanying those gentlemen to dine with him on his retirement to Dulwich, convey-

ed in Mr. Reeves's carriage. I remember with much pleasure these occasions, as we were highly gratified by Mr. Bowles and his amiable lady. Mr. Bowles was warmly attached to Mr. Pitt. From motives of old friendship, and sympathy of political principles, he bequeathed one hundred pounds to me in his will, and Mrs. Bowles also favoured me with a mourning ring, as a confirmation of the friendship of her lamented husband.

MR. WILLIAM SHIELD. Perhaps there never was an individual more respected, esteemed, and admired than this late eminent composer. With a shrewd, intelligent, and reflecting mind, and a manly spirit, there was a simplicity in his manners that obviously indicated the benevolence of his disposition. Of his musical merits it would be unnecessary for me to speak, as his compositions were universally admired for their deep science as well as for their fancy, taste, and sensibility. His martial airs are characterised by bold expression and powerful effect. He was particularly esteemed by all his musical brethren, and a numerous train of private friends.

I once had the pleasure of taking Mr. Shield to drink tea with the veteran poet and musician Charles Dibdin the elder. They had never met before, and it was not a little gratifying to me to witness the cordiality with which these congenial spirits received each other. I also introduced Mr. Battishill, an eminent composer and performer, and Mr. Shield to each other for the first time.

MR. M. G. LEWIS, better known by the name of MONK LEWIS. I never had the pleasure of knowing this gentleman, though we both mixed so much with the theatrical world ; I only knew his person. But

his character was so much respected, and his literary and dramatic talents rendered him at once so conspicuous, that he should not be passed without notice. His father held a high situation in the War Office, and allowed his son 800*l.* a-year, while the latter was in Parliament. His parents had been separated some years, and as the mother's allowance was scanty, the son, with true filial affection, gave a moiety of his income for her support. When the father heard of this act of filial affection, he observed, that if his son could live upon 400*l.* a-year, he should reduce his income to that sum. The son then, at the hazard of a similar reduction, again divided his income with his mother. Such conduct ought to be recorded.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Lewis wrote his celebrated romance entitled "The Monk," though it must be acknowledged that the work displays great invention and descriptive power, and considerable poetic excellence. As this gentleman was much courted by the higher circles, and was a popular author, it is strange that he should have sunk into the grave with as little notice as if he were a common individual. He had visited the West Indies to look after some property which devolved to him, and as he was returning to this country, died on the passage. His death was simply noticed in the public journals, merely by his name, though some tribute to his talents and his memory might naturally be expected. His "Castle Spectre" was very popular and attractive, and was of great advantage to Drury Lane Theatre. The following is told respecting this piece, for which he had not received his profits as the author. In some argumentative dispute with

Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Lewis, meaning to reproach Mr. Sheridan for delaying the pecuniary recompense due to the author, offered to lay a sum equal to what the Theatre had derived from "The Castle Spectre," that he was in the right. "No," said Mr. Sheridan, "I will not lay so large a sum as what the piece brought, but I will readily hazard what it is intrinsically worth." Soon after this satirical sally, the author was duly rewarded.

COLONEL FREDERICK, whom I have mentioned before, as the son of Theodore, King of Corsica by the voluntary choice of a whole people, was a particular friend of mine. He told me he was once in so much distress, that when he waited the result of a petition at the Court of Vienna, he had actually been two days without food. On the third day a lady in attendance on the Court, whom he had previously addressed on the subject of his petition, observing his languid and exhausted state, offered him some refreshment; he of course consenting, she ordered him a dish of chocolate, with some cakes, which rendered him more able to converse with her: in a short time they conceived a regard for each other, and were afterwards married.

He told me she stated that her reason for delaying to procure an answer to his petition was in order to prolong the intercourse between them. How long the lady lived I know not; as I enjoyed his company, but did not think proper to enquire more of his history than he was disposed to relate. He had a son whom I knew, a very elegant young man, who was an officer in the British army, and was killed in the American War. He had a daughter also, named Clarke, whom I knew after the Colonel's death. She

had, I believe, some offspring, but to whom she had been married, and what became of her family, I never knew.

I remember that in the short interview which I had with her, in consequence of the death of her father, she showed me the Great Seal, and some Regalia of the Crown of Corsica, which her grandfather had retained in the wreck of his fortunes. The Colonel told me that he was once in the condition of a reading secretary to the great Frederick, King of Prussia, but he was treated by that monarch with such proud austerity that he grew tired of the service, and particularly as Voltaire, and other profligate philosophers, were suffered to converse with the monarch at table, while Frederick was obliged to stand in the room all the time. At length, having applied to the Duke of Wirtemberg, to whom his father was related, he was offered protection at his Court. When he informed the King of Prussia of this arrangement, the latter said, "Ay, you may go, it is fit that one beggar should live with another." The Colonel afterwards joined his father during his adversity in this country, and I believe supported himself as a teacher of languages, for which I understood him to be well qualified. He related to me the following curious incident.

He said that while his father was in the Fleet Prison for debt, Sir John Stewart was a fellow-prisoner on the same account. The latter had a turkey presented to him by a friend, and he invited King Theodore and his son to partake of it. Lady Jane Douglas was of the party. She had her child, and a girl with her as a maid-servant, to carry the child; she lived in an obscure lodging at Chelsea.

In the evening, Colonel Frederick offered to attend her home, and she accepted his courtesy. The child was carried in turn by the mother, the girl, and the colonel. On their journey he said there was a slight rain, and common civility would have induced him to call a coach, but that he had no money in his pocket, and he was afraid that Lady Jane was in the same predicament. He was therefore, obliged to submit to the suspicion of churlish meanness or poverty, and to content himself with occasionally carrying the child to the end of the journey.

The colonel used to consider that child as the rightful claimant of the property on which he was opposed by the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton; but whether his conjecture corresponds with the date of the transactions which took place in relation to the Douglas cause, is not within my knowledge. It is proper to observe, that Colonel Frederick stated his father to have been in the Fleet Prison, but in a periodical paper entitled "The World," published in the year in which a subscription was proposed for the relief of King Theodore, he is represented as being then in the King's Bench Prison.

The letters of Mr. Andrew Stewart, one of the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton, addressed to Lord Mansfield on this subject, are well known for diligent research, accurate reasoning, and a spirit of candour thoroughly consistent with zeal in the cause, and good breeding. These letters, as far as I understood, were thought to carry truth and conviction to the minds of all who were not interested in the pretensions of the claimant. Here I may properly introduce a manuscript note which was given to me, by the late reverend Richard Penneck. He had lent

me Mr. Andrew Stewart's letters, and he gave me this note as corroborative of Mr. Stewart's facts and reasonings. This note, which I copy from Mr. Penneck's hand-writing, is as follows :—

“ The reader, it is presumed, cannot be surprised, perhaps he may be pleased, at being informed that Monsieur Menager, whom he will find so often mentioned in these letters as accoucheur, has been sent to the galleys for life, for being concerned in a fraudulent business, similar to the affair in question. This is an unquestionable fact.” Mr. Penneck adds, “ This note was found by a worthy friend in the frontispiece of the work, (in MS.) in his possession.”

The colonel related to me another curious anecdote, on which I rely, as I always found him consistent in his narrations. When Prince Poniatowski, who was afterwards Stanislaus, the last King of Poland, was in this country, his chief, I might perhaps truly say, his only companion was Colonel Frederick. They were accustomed to walk together round the suburbs of the town, and to dine at a tavern or common eating-house. On one occasion the prince had some bills to discount in the city, and took Frederick with him to transact the business. The prince remained at Batson's Coffee-House, Cornhill, while Frederick was employed on the bills. Some impediment occurred, which prevented the affair from being settled that day, and they proceeded on their usual walk before dinner, round Islington. After their walk they went to Dolly's, in Paternoster Row. Their dinner was beef-steaks, a pot of porter, and a bottle of port. The bill was presented to the prince, who, on looking over it, said it was reasonable, and handed it to

Frederick, who concurred in the same opinion, and returned it to the prince, who desired him to pay. "I have no money," said Frederick. "Nor have I," said the prince. "What are we to do?" he added. Frederick paused a few moments, then desiring the Prince to remain until he returned, left the place, pledged his watch at the nearest pawnbroker's, and thus discharged the reckoning. My old friend Mr. Const, chairman of the Middlesex Sessions, who was well acquainted with Frederick, says, that the article pledged was not Frederick's watch, but the prince's cane, which he held in great value; yet, as far as my recollection serves, it was the watch.

The prince after he became Monarch of Poland, occasionally kept up an intercourse with Frederick, and in one of his letters asked the latter if he remembered when they were "in pawn at a London Tavern."

The colonel had lodged in Northumberland Street, in the Strand, long before I knew him; and according to the account which I heard from Mr. Const, was obliged to fly half naked from the house, which had taken fire, and was received into that of Mr. Stirling, the present respectable coroner for the county of Middlesex, who resided in the same street. Mr. Stirling offered the colonel an asylum in his own house gratuitously, and allotted to him the second floor, where he resided for many years.

The colonel's conversation on the classics, on military transactions, and on the great German generals of that period, was highly instructive and amusing. While very much respected, and at all times an acceptable guest to many friends, he was unfortunately

induced by an acquaintance to accept two notes. The man, who was a trading justice at that time, died before the notes became due, and Frederick, seeing that he should be responsible without any pecuniary resource, and apprehensive of confinement in a gaol, formed the desperate design of suicide, borrowed a pistol of a friend, and shot himself one evening, in the church-yard of St. Margaret Westminster. He called on me on the Wednesday previous to this fatal act, which took place on the following Friday. I was at home, but ordered myself to be denied, as I was then practising as an oculist, and was at the time going to visit a patient, whose case did not admit of delay. I, however, heard him enquire for me with the same vivid spirit with which he generally spoke, and bitterly reproached myself for not having seen him when he called, as it struck me that something might have arisen in conversation to have prevented the dreadful event.

The colonel, by his constant reading of classic authors, had imbued his mind with a kind of Roman indifference of life. He arose generally very early in the morning, lighted the fire when the season required it, cleaned his boots, prepared himself for a walk, took his breakfast, then read the classical authors until it was time to take exercise and visit his friends. This even tenor of life might have continued for many years, if he had not unfortunately put his hand to the bills in question; but the prospect of a hopeless privation of liberty, and the attendant evils and horrors of a gaol, operated so strongly upon his mind, habituated to ancient Roman notions, as to occasion the dreadful termination of his life by suicide.

X

CHAPTER XVII.

JOHN WOLCOT, M.D. I became acquainted with this extraordinary character in the year 1785, and, with some intervals, arising from suspicion and mistake on his part, I believe I was more intimate with him than any other of his numerous connexions. What chiefly promoted our intimacy, was my sincere admiration of his talents, and his persuasion that I understood his genius and general character better than most of his other friends. I believe I may venture to say that such was the fact. I confess, I think he possessed an original genius, which entitles him to a very high rank in the literary annals of the country.

He was generally understood to be a good Latin scholar, and had made a considerable progress in the Greek language. His chief passion was for poetry, which he discovered very early in life, and never relinquished. His tendency was chiefly to satire, but, being a great admirer of the ladies, he very soon indulged himself in writing amatory verses. Yet, though many of them were marked by tenderness and elegance, his humour interposed, and they generally concluded with some epigrammatic point.

He was a great observer of Nature in every possible mode, and used to say, that, far from being exhausted, her works supplied an inexhaustible source of new imagery to an attentive observer. He often talked of the difference between the *made*

poet and the poet of Nature. The former he said might produce very good poems, but their excellence was derivative, and they had nothing original in their composition; while the real poet studied Nature herself, and viewed life rather than books. This opinion may appear common-place; it is however certain that there are more original thoughts to be found in his works than in any other author of modern times, nor, perhaps, in that respect would it be extravagant to compare him with some of the best of our former writers. What Melmoth, in his "Fitzosborn's Letters," says of "The Spleen," written by Matthew Green, may fairly be said of Wolcot's "Lousiad," viz. that there are more original ideas in that poem than are to be found in any other work of the same extent.

I have been often laughed at for my high opinion of Dr. Wolcot's genius, but console myself with the notion, that they who ridicule me had either not read his works, or wanted judgment and humour sufficient to understand them. That he frequently fell into low imagery, I readily admit, but it will always be found that it was still original, and not without a strong point.

There is a well written account of the doctor in the "Annual Biography and Obituary for the year 1820," but the author is mistaken in some instances, particularly as to the success of his first publication, his "Lyric Odes on the Painters," which, far from being profitable, were so little noticed, except by the artists, that the publication cost him forty pounds. Soon after these Odes were published, I was introduced to him accidentally by Mr. Penneck. I had read the "Lyric Odes," and when in the course of conversa-

tion I found that the doctor was the author of them, I was anxious to cultivate an acquaintance with so humorous and so original a writer. I then conducted a public journal, and by frequent extracts from his works, and the insertion of many of his unpublished poems, I brought the name of Peter Pindar into so much notice that Mr. Kearsley, then a popular bookseller, introduced himself to him, and was a ready and liberal purchaser of all his productions.

The doctor has often declared that he was indebted to my zeal to bring him into notice, for half of his fame and fortune. I must, however, do myself the justice to declare that I endeavoured to give notoriety to his name before he wrote such reprehensible attacks upon our late venerable sovereign; but as people are too apt to feel pleasure in attacks on their superiors, and as the doctor at that time did not abound in money, my exhortations and entreaties had no effect in opposition to his interest. He, however, hardly ever wrote anything that he did not submit to me in manuscript; and I may confidently say, that I induced him to make many alterations and suppressions, which not only rendered his works less exceptionable, but most probably saved him from legal consequences.

I have often been surprised, as he was really a timid man, how he could venture to take such freedoms, not only with the royal character, but with many of the upper ranks. With respect to our late excellent monarch George the Third, he used to say, that he revered the British constitution, and held its political head in due veneration; but that he felt justified in sporting with the peculiarities of the

private character of the monarch. It was in vain that I opposed these opinions, and referred him to Blackstone, to show the punishment annexed to works that were calculated to bring the character of the monarch into contempt. In short, he found the topic too profitable to be abandoned, and therefore pursued it to such an extent as to render it wonderful that it should not have attracted the attention of the law officers of government. If legal notice had been taken of his muse, she would certainly have been silenced, at least upon that subject; and I can affirm that upon one occasion, as I have already stated, when he was in fear that he should draw upon himself the vengeance of government, he had actually prepared to set off for America, and determined never to revisit this country. The apprehension, however, subsided, and impunity made him bolder.

His lines addressed to the infamous Thomas Paine during the French revolution, afford a proof of his attachment to the constitution of the country; and, to use his own expression, due care should always be taken by wise statesmen to prevent "the unenlightened million" from having any share in political power.

Here it may be proper to give some account of what was called Peter's pension, of which no true statement has ever appeared, though many have been published. We were one day dining with a gentleman, intimately connected with a member of the government at that time, and in the course of conversation the doctor expressed himself with so much vehemence against the French revolution, which was raging at that time, and the principles on which it was founded, that I jocularly said to our

host, "The doctor seems to show symptoms of *bribability*." The gentleman encouraged the joke, and addressing the doctor, "Come, doctor," said he, "with these opinions you can have no objection to support the Government—shall I open a negotiation?" The doctor gave a doubtful, but not a discouraging answer, and then the subject dropped, but the next morning the doctor called on the gentleman, and knowing that he was in the confidence of Government, asked him if he was serious in what he had said the day before. The gentleman, not being without alarm at the progress of French principles, and their ensnaring nature; aware too of the power of ridicule, and how formidable a weapon it was in the hands of the doctor; told him seriously that if he was really inclined to afford the support of his pen to Government, he thought he could procure for him its patronage. The doctor said he had several works in preparation against ministers individually, which he would suppress if that would do, but was not disposed to be actively employed in favour of Government. The gentleman, with some compliment to his satirical talents, told him that he could not negotiate on such terms, for, if he published libels, the law might be put in force against him; remarking at the same time, that by supporting Government he would be acting upon his own declared principles, which were so hostile to those by which the French monarchy had been overthrown. After farther discussion, the doctor permitted him to open the negotiation. Though Government had not given the least intimation on the subject, yet when so powerful a pen was offered, it was too well acquainted with the doctor's powers to negative the

proposal. At length it was settled that the doctor should have three hundred a year for active services. Wolcot stickled hard for five hundred a year, but, finding that he could not succeed, he consented to the measure. He, however, wrote nothing but a few epigrams against the Jacobins, which he sent to the editor of "The Sun" newspaper. This, however, not being deemed an adequate service, I frequently advised him to be more active, but a sort of shame hung about him for having engaged in support of a Government which he had so often abused, or rather its members, and I never could rouse him into action.

I should mention, that a difficulty had arisen as to the medium through which he was to receive the recompense. The gentleman who had opened the negotiation positively declined the office, and, as the doctor was prohibited from going himself to the quarter where it was to be received, matters seemed to be at a stand; however, as I was really an "alarmist," to use Mr. Sheridan's word, and thought highly of the advantage which might be derived from the doctor's talents, I offered to be the channel of remuneration. Wolcot, though he really did nothing more than what I have above mentioned, was constantly urging me "to bring the bag," as he styled it. Reluctant, however, to ask for money which he had done nothing to deserve, I delayed my application so long that he grew impatient, and asked me if he might go himself to the quarter in question. I answered that I thought it was the best way, for I had reason to believe he considered he was really to have five hundred a year, and that the gentleman who had

negotiated the business and myself were to divide the other two. The doctor then angrily applied to the fountain-head, and on enquiring what sum he was to have, was told that it was to be three hundred a year, and that I had spoken of his talents in the highest terms, and of the advantages which might be expected from them. He then declared that he should decline the business altogether, and returned the ten pounds which he had taken of our host, as he said, to "bind the bargain." Disgusted with his suspicion, I reproached him on the occasion, and we separated in anger.

As I knew the doctor was too apt to give a favourable colouring to his own cause, and that he had represented the whole transaction as a trap to ensnare him, though the overture had actually come from himself, I addressed a letter to him, and faithfully and fully detailed the whole affair, telling him that I kept a copy of my letter to read wherever I heard that he had misrepresented the matter. Many years of separation passed, but hearing he was blind, infirm, lame, and asthmatic, I resolved one Monday morning to begin the week with an extinction of all enmity between us, and went to his lodgings in Somers' Town on that day. I addressed him in the most friendly tone, but he did not recollect my voice, and when he understood who I was, he appeared delighted, pressed me to have a glass of brandy-and-water, though it was morning, and said that if I would stay, I should have a beef-steak or anything else I could desire. In short, we were reconciled in a moment, and I repeated my visits as often as convenient to me, promising that I would positively drink tea with him on every Saturday. I

found his faculties as good as ever, and his poetical talents in full vigour.

I often wrote several of his compositions from his dictation, which were not published, but fell into the hands of his worthless executor. I derived so much pleasure and instruction from his conversation, that I was constant in my attendance upon him on the stipulated day. Having, however, unavoidably omitted one Saturday, he sent one of his female servants to desire me to come, and to tell me that he had something for me. I went, when he desired me to take up the pen, and dictated the following lines, which he said he should have sent to me if he had been able to write, and they were the very last he ever suggested.

INVITATION.

Taylor, why keep so long away
From one who hates a gloomy day?
Then let not laziness o'ercome ye,
Hasten with stories, wit, and rhyme,
To give a fillip to dull time,
And drive the d—n'd blue devils from me.

Ah! Taylor, "*non sum qualis eram*,"
For to the tomb I fear I near am,
But who can hope to live for ever?
One foot is in the grave, no doubt,
Then come and try to help it out,
An ode shall praise thy kind endeavour.

The ode, however, he did not live to write, which I sincerely regret, as I have reason to believe that it would have manifested at once, his favourable opinion of me, his genius, his humour, and his friendship.

A few days before his death he sent two land-

scapes to me painted by the old masters, for one of which I had many years before offered to give him five guineas, which he refused, saying in his strong manner, "No—I won't sell pleasure." Both of these pictures were so much injured by negligence and bad treatment, that they were not worth accepting otherwise than as memorials of friendship. From one of them, that which I had offered to purchase, my excellent friend Mr. Westall, R.A. kindly cut off the injured parts, and reduced it into a pleasing moonlight scene, which I now possess.

As far as I can presume to judge, Doctor Wolcot had a profound knowledge of painting, and a refined taste for that art. His objections were generally urged with original humour and ludicrous comparisons, which had all the force and accuracy of the most elaborate criticism. He said that his great aim was to make Opie a Michael Angelo Buonarroti, but that he must first have made him a gentleman, which he found impossible. This remark, however, was made during his variance with that original artist, of whose talents he thought highly and deservedly.

The raillery which frequently took place between him and Opie, was highly diverting. Wolcot's sallies were marked with vigour, with a classical point, and Opie's with all the energy of a mind naturally very powerful; their controversies always ended with laughter on both sides, and without the least ill will. The contest was what Johnson applies to the characters in Congreve's plays, an "intellectual gladiatorship," in which neither might be deemed the victor. The doctor and I used frequently to fall into contests of the same kind, but I found him

generally too strong, and my only expedient was to make him laugh, by retorting some of his old sallies against me, which the company thought were my own, and he used to smile at my impudence in repeating them against him. Sometimes those in company who did not know us, were apprehensive that we should part in enmity, but we always went home arm in arm, as if nothing had happened.

My weekly visits continued many years, with unabated pleasure on my part, and I may presume much to the gratification of the doctor.

As a proof that he was a kind and considerate master, when one of his servants came to tell me that he had been taken ill, and was delirious when she left him, she wept all the time that she described his situation. I went as soon as I could in the afternoon, and then learned that he had recovered his faculties, but was asleep. I sat by his bedside, expecting he would awake, amusing myself with a volume of his works until ten o'clock. He then awoke, and I told him how long I had been there, observing that it was a dreary way home, and perhaps not quite safe, concluding with saying, "Is there any thing on earth that I can do for you?" His answer, delivered in a deep and strong tone, was, "Bring back my youth." He fell into a sleep again, and I left him. On calling on him the next day, I found he had died, as might be said, in his sleep, and that those words were the last he ever uttered.

Such was the end of a man who possessed extraordinary powers, great acquisitions, and an original genius. I cannot but consider him indeed as a man among those of the most distinguished talents that

this country has produced, and whose works ought, and must be considered as compositions marked by extraordinary powers, inexhaustible humour, satire, and imagination.*

There are reasonable doubts about the authenticity of his will. The person who possessed it was a very vulgar man, but very cunning, and well acquainted with the world. The doctor was disgusted with him, and only endured him because he hated solitude after he was blind. Wolcot, who thought him an honest man, told me that he had his will. I told him what the doctor had said, and he denied that he was entrusted with a will. After Wolcot's death, however, he said that he had found the will among some copper-plates, from drawings by the doctor, from which prints had been published. A very respectable person who is a clerk in one of the

* Doctor Wolcot may be said to have been profoundly conversant with the nature of man. He had mixed with various classes of mankind, and his knowledge of them rendered him very discerning, and of consequence very suspicious. The following anecdote appears to me to be a striking proof of his penetration, though to others, when the solution is known, it may be deemed a natural inference. He dined one day with a niece of Dr. Warburton, who, in speaking highly in praise of her uncle, expressed her surprise that ever he should be thought a proud man, "for," said she, "I have been with him when there were lords, bishops, and rich men in company, and he took more notice of me, and talked more with me, than with any of the rest." The poor woman, as Dr. Wolcot justly observed, could hardly have given a better specimen of the pride of her uncle, who, to show his contempt for *great people*, devoted his attention to a silly old gossip. People in general might consider the old woman's story as literally a proof of the humility of Warburton, and I probably among them, but the discernment of Wolcot led him to the proper interpretation of his conduct. This development may remind us of Columbus and the egg.

offices in Somerset House, who was entrusted by Wolcot, and who used to receive dividends for him at the Bank, assured me that it was impossible a will could be found in the alleged situation, as he had looked over the copper-plates a short time before; that no paper was among them; and that it was likewise impossible for the doctor, blind as he was, to have placed any paper there at a subsequent period, or to have found his way to the place where the copper-plates were deposited.

What strengthens the suspicion that the will was not genuine, is, that it was witnessed by two persons, whose names were wholly unknown to the servants, and whom they never remembered as visitors to their master. The servants were sisters, and the elder was a shrewd, intelligent, and attentive young woman. Their master had often mentioned the sums that he should respectively leave to them, and which the executor ultimately paid. He also paid the clerk whom I have mentioned fifty pounds, and me the same sum, which the doctor had desired him to specify in writing, and which he signed as well as he could in his helpless situation. Wolcot's then surviving sister, knowing my intimacy with him, wrote to me enquiring the particulars respecting his death, and expressing her surprise that he had not left her any thing, as he had signified to her in a letter which he had dictated and sent to her, that he hoped he should be able to leave her a few hundreds. I made a profile drawing of him, which his friend the elder Mr. Heath engraved, and which, with a biography that I wrote of him, was inserted in the *Lady's Magazine*, of which Mr. Heath was then the proprietor. I sent the *Magazine* to the

doctor's sister, who wrote a letter to me, thanking me for my attention, and requesting my acceptance of the second folio of Shakspeare's Works, published by Hemings and Condell, which I received from the executor on producing her letter. The doctor left many boxes full of unpublished manuscripts of his own writing, for which the bookseller, it is said, offered a thousand pounds, but for which the executor demanded double the sum; and as he also is dead, they will probably be disposed of as waste-paper, though perhaps, if properly selected, they might prove a valuable addition to the poetical treasures of the country.

The doctor's love of life was intense. He has often said that he would take a lease of five hundred years from nature. "What!" said I, "with all your infirmities?" "Yes," said he; "for while here you are something, but when dead you are nothing;" yet he firmly believed in the existence of a Supreme Being. I remember once mentioning the doctor's love of life to Mr. Sheridan, expressing my surprise. Mr. Sheridan said, that he would not only take a lease for five hundred years, but for ever, provided he was in health, in good circumstances, and with such friends as he then possessed; yet if he had taken due care of his health, and prudently managed his fortune, he might still be alive and an ornament to the country.

Dr. Wolcot had been in various parts of the world, and had mixed with all the different classes of mankind, the result of which intercourse was, a very unfavourable opinion of human nature. He had a dire hatred of all foreign courts, and of politicians in all countries. He thought that foreign potentates in all

states were capable of the utmost tyranny and oppression, and that they would employ the worst means to effect their purposes. Though he held the nobility in great contempt, as proud, insolent, ignorant, and unfeeling, yet he confessed that he always felt awe in their presence.

I have been a frequent witness of the awe which he felt before great persons. Once I remember being in a private room of the old Opera House, where His Majesty George the Fourth, then Prince of Wales, condescended to permit Dr. Wolcot to be introduced to him. The prince received him in the most gracious manner, and in a short conversation observed, with dignified affability, that he admired his genius, but sometimes thought it ill-directed. The doctor seemed to sink with humility and self-reproach, and made a mumbling, inaudible apology. The prince maintained the same dignified ease and affability, and Wolcot recovered his spirits enough to express his hopes that his royal highness would have less reason hereafter to find fault with his humble muse. Nothing could be more graceful than the manner in which his royal highness took leave of the doctor, who, from that time, never resumed an attack upon the royal family, but transferred all his satirical hostility to the ministers. It was understood that the prince was aware of this meeting, and it was inferred that he thought a courteous rebuke would have a better effect upon the doctor in checking the licence of his pen, than all the severity of the law, if it should be called into action against him; and the expedient succeeded.

Another time I was going up the stairs at the same Opera House with the doctor, when we met the

late Duke of Cumberland, who with perfect good-humour said, "How do 'you do, Pindaricus?" Wolcot felt abashed, but not to the same degree as when before the prince.

I learned from the late Duke of Leeds, with whom I had the honour to be acquainted, that meeting Dr. Wolcot in the green-room of Covent Garden Theatre, who had attacked him in one of his poems, the duke addressed him with great courtesy, and desired him to accompany him to his box, and he would introduce him to the duchess. Wolcot could not resist the overture, but went with timid hesitation, and was introduced to the duchess. The duke told me, that in the course of conversation he adverted to the doctor's attack upon him, and said, "But, doctor, if you disapproved of my politics, why did you ridicule my nose—I could not help that?" Wolcot attempted to excuse himself, saying he had heard that his grace had, with other ministers, advised a prosecution against him for the freedom of his pen. The duke assured him he was misinformed, and that he revered the freedom of the press. The doctor was received by the duke and duchess with great courtesy, and they parted in the most amicable manner.

I was first introduced to his grace, when Marquis of Carmarthen, by Dr. Monsey, at his apartments in Chelsea Hospital, and he always saluted me with great kindness from that period till his death. The duke told me that as he was once going down the stairs at St. James's Palace, he saw the celebrated Earl of Bath descending at the same time, and apparently with great pain. The duke, then Lord Osborn, offered his assistance, which the earl accept-

ed; and as they went down the stairs, the latter said, "Thank you, young gentleman, I have more difficulty in getting down these stairs now, than ever I had in getting up them," alluding, of course, to his former political importance.

The Duke of Leeds possessed poetical talents, as was evident in a prologue which he once wrote, and in his *Ex pede Herculem*, which obviously showed that if he had continued to court the muse, he would not have wooed her in vain. He was one of the best-bred gentleman I ever knew. I remember when speaking of his grace with the late Mr. Kemble, the latter said the duke always reminded him of the higher characters in Congreve, observing that he had their ease, courtesy, elegance, and sprightliness in his conversation, without any of their licentiousness and occasional grossness.

I have often met his grace in the green-room of Covent Garden Theatre, and sometimes he appeared a little under the influence of Bacchus, in consequence, it was said, of the want of domestic felicity; but he never deviated in the slightest degree from his habitual politeness, affability, and good humour. Never was there a greater contrast than between the deportment of his grace and that of the late Marquis of Abercorn, whom I sometimes saw in the same place. The marquis assumed a haughty dignity of demeanour, and looked around as if he thought he disgraced himself by condescending to cast a glance upon any person in the room. The performers, who are never wanting in humour, ridicule, and mimicry, on his departure, amply revenged themselves for his indignant neglect by amusing caricatures of his manner. Not so with the Duke of

Leeds, who was always treated by them with the most respectful attention, and seemed to raise them in their opinion of themselves by his courteous kindness and unaffected affability.

I once presented to his grace my first metrical production, for I fear to call it poetry, but did not annex my residence to the few original stanzas in manuscript by which it was accompanied; and the next time I had the pleasure of meeting him, he gently rebuked me, and said that if he had known where I lived, he would not have contented himself with writing to me, but would have waited upon me to thank me in person. I lamented my omission, as I should have witnessed a perfect example of good-breeding, and should have profited by the intelligence and abundance of anecdotes that characterised his conversation. His grace frequently invited Mr. Kemble, and other higher actors, to meet several distinguished literary characters at his hospitable mansion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. WILLIAM WOODFALL. This gentleman, who was one of my early friends, was not more distinguished by his extraordinary memory than by the rectitude and benevolence of his private character. His memory was, indeed, wonderfully accurate and retentive. The public journal which he instituted, and for many years conducted, was rendered so popular by his faithful report of parliamentary debates, that the proprietors of other public journals were obliged to resort to similar means, in order to keep up the comparative credit of their respective papers; but they were obliged also to employ many reporters in order to sustain any rivalry with Mr. Woodfall in that department of a newspaper. His practice in the House of Commons during a debate was to close his eyes, and to lean with both hands on his stick. He was so well acquainted with the tone and manner of the several speakers, that he only deviated from his customary posture when a new member addressed the house, and having heard his name, he had no subsequent occasion for farther enquiry.

Upon one occasion some observations were made upon one of Mr. Woodfall's reports in the Court of King's Bench, when Lord Kenyon was Chief Justice. In consequence of what the counsel had said on the report in question, in which a fact of some importance was involved, Lord Kenyon de-

sired to see the newspaper, which was handed to him. After perusing the passage referred to, his lordship enquired if the journalist was the gentleman who was so distinguished for accuracy in reporting debates, and being answered in the affirmative, he said, that he had been so frequent a witness of that gentleman's surprising correctness in reporting debates in the House of Lords, that he was disposed to give implicit credit to his precision in the present instance, and therefore no more was said on the subject.

But what increased the wonder as to the powers of his memory, was his ability to retain a full recollection of any particular debate a fortnight after it had occurred, and during the intervention of many other debates. On such occasions he used to say, that he had placed it in a corner of his mind for future reference. When employed in writing his reports, he was not so absorbed in the subject as to be incapable of playful aberrations, of which I may properly mention an instance, related to me by Mr. John Windus, of the Court of Exchequer.

Mr. Woodfall, on account of his judgment and candour as a dramatic and theatrical critic, and for his zeal in supporting the interests of the drama, was permitted by the theatrical proprietors to write orders for the admission of his friends. Mr. Windus, then a boy, during his school vacation, called on him for the purpose of asking for an order. Mrs. Woodfall told him, that as her husband was then occupied on a very important debate, he could not see him. Mr. Woodfall, however, hearing his voice, called him into his private room and enquired what he wanted. Being told, he said, "Oh, you want an order," and proceeded on his debate. Having reached some

period that admitted of a pause, he again asked young Windus what he wanted, and the request being repeated, he uttered the same words and resumed writing the debate. After many repetitions of the same question and answer, Mr. Woodfall took a piece of paper and wrote something to the following effect, addressed to the boy's schoolmaster: "Sir, the bearer is a very bad boy, and I desire you will give him a severe whipping, and place it to the account of yours, Toby Ticklerump." After young Windus had recovered from his surprise, Mr. Woodfall, with his usual kindness, gave the proper order and returned to his occupation.

This circumstance, however unimportant in itself, is mentioned to show that, in the midst of a labour that might be expected to engross all his mental powers, he was able to indulge a facetious humour. Mr. Windus kept the whimsical order till his riper years, as a singular proof of the intellectual power and playful humour of his early friend.

I was well acquainted with Mr. Woodfall, and can bear a cordial testimony to his moral worth, and the candour and justice of his theatrical criticisms. He always seemed to touch the true points of merit and defects in a drama, or in the performance; but while he proved his judgment, he was always warm in his panegyrics and lenient in his censure. When attending any new drama, or new performer, his attention seemed by the expression of his features to approach to severity, though there was nothing like it in his heart.

I remember the late Mr. John Kemble, when we were once sitting together at the theatre, bade me observe Mr. Woodfall in one of those serious moods,

and said, "How applicable to him is the passage in Hamlet, 'thoughts black, hands apt.'" After conducting "The Morning Chronicle" with a due attention to the course of public events and characters, and without any of that daring scandal, scurrility, and frivolous levity too characteristic of the public prints, as the proprietors of that paper were not capable of properly estimating the value of his talents, and wanted to impose restraints upon his power as editor, he relinquished his connexion with it, and instituted a new daily paper under the title of "The Diary," which he supported by his name and abilities for many years; but as parliamentary debates became the chief objects of public attention, as the rival journals were directed to the same objects, and as he had to contend against a host of reporters, who were able to render the debates as long, and, perhaps, longer than it was possible for his individual efforts to extend them, the success of his new paper did not fulfil his expectations, which induced him to put an end to it on a Saturday.

To show the grateful feelings that animated his heart on the very day in which he terminated the existence of "The Diary," he sent a letter to me, expressing his thanks for the voluntary and gratuitous articles with which I had supplied him for many years, and which on my part were gratifying contributions of friendship to a worthy man, who was always prompt and zealous in the exertion of his talents wherever they could be useful.

Mrs. Woodfall was an excellent wife and mother. There were five sons, and one daughter, all of whom were educated with parental care, and all of whom rewarded that care by their good conduct and their

talents. The eldest son, who was sent to the university, and who displayed great abilities, was able to render valuable service to his father's journal, and promised to become eminent at the bar or in the pulpit, but was unfortunately, in the midst of the hopes which his intellectual powers and attainments had excited, seized with a mental malady which totally unfitted him for business, and at length finally obliged the family to place him in a situation appropriated to such melancholy cases.

Mr. Woodfall was a very hospitable character. He possessed a very handsome residence at Kentish Town, which was often the scene of friendship and conviviality. I remember passing a very pleasant day at this mansion. Among the numerous guests on that occasion were the late Mr. Tickel, whose literary and colloquial powers were well known; the late Mr. Richardson, whose literary talents were justly admired for his part in that memorable publication "The Rolliad and the Probationary Odes," which once excited public attention in no slight degree; the late Mr. John Kemble; the late Mr. Perry of "The Morning Chronicle;" Dr. Glover, whose facetious and convivial powers were in high repute; and Francis Const, Esq. The day was a little interrupted by a short dispute between Mr. Kemble and Mr. Perry, the latter having given an offensive answer to something said by Mr. Kemble. Mr. Kemble looked at him with contempt, and, wishing to put an end to the contest, said emphatically, with Zanga, "A lion preys not upon carcases." This rejoinder roused Mr. Perry, and serious hostilities might have ensued, if Mr. Const and Mr. Richardson had not instantly interposed, and

by their friendly and impressive mediation restored peace and good humour.

The late Mr. Francis Twiss, father of the present Mr. Horace Twiss, by the sister of Mr. Kemble, was also one of the party, and as soon as Mr. Perry arose with an evident hostile spirit, he arose also to support his friend Kemble, and to effect a reconciliation, but his feelings overpowered him, and the work of amity was effectually accomplished by Messrs. Const and Richardson. Care, however, was judiciously taken by Mr. Woodfall to prevent the disputants from returning to town in the same vehicle, lest the contest should be renewed. I returned in the same coach with Mr. Const, Mr. Kemble, and Mr. Twiss, and there was no allusion to the unpleasant controversy in our journey.

Mr. Woodfall had a high idea of the importance of a parliamentary reporter, and when I one day congratulated him on having his elder son in town to assist him, during a very heavy week—"Yes," said he, "and Charles Fox to have a debate on a Saturday!—what! does he think that reporters are made of iron?" There is a ludicrous simplicity in his thus supposing that a great politician, with an object of consequence to his party in view, should have thought of parliamentary reporters.

Mr. Woodfall told me, that after Dr. Dodd had been tried and convicted, but not ordered for execution, he sent to request Mr. Woodfall would visit him in Newgate. Mr. Woodfall, who was always ready at the call of distress, naturally supposed the doctor wished to consult him on his situation, or to desire that he would insert some article in his favour in "The Morning Chronicle." On entering

the place of confinement, Mr. Woodfall began to condole with him on his unfortunate situation. The doctor immediately interrupted him, and said that he wished to see him on quite a different subject. He then told Mr. Woodfall, that, knowing his judgment on dramatic matters, he was anxious to have his opinion of a comedy which he had written, and if he approved of it, to request his interest with the managers to bring it on the stage. Mr. Woodfall was not only surprised but shocked to find the doctor so insensible to his situation, and the more so, because whenever he attempted to offer consolation, the doctor as often said "Oh! they will not hang me!" while, to aggravate Mr. Woodfall's feelings, he had been informed by Mr. Ackerman, the keeper of Newgate, before his interview with the doctor, that the order for his execution had actually reached the prison. For this extraordinary fact, the reader may confidently rely on the veracity of Mr. Woodfall.*

* I once heard the unfortunate doctor preach at the Magdalen Hospital. Presuming upon his importance, he did not arrive till the service was over, and a clergyman had entered the pulpit and commenced the sermon. The clergyman, however, resigned his situation as soon as the doctor appeared. His discourse was delivered with energy, but with something theatrical in his action and poetical in his language. Among other passages of a lofty description, I remember he said, that "the man whose life is conducted according to the principles of the Christian religion, will have the satisfaction of an approving conscience and the glory of an admiring God." Dodd published a volume of poems, some of which are in Dodsley's collection. His sermons have a tincture of poetry in the language. I heard him a second time in Charlotte Chapel, Pimlico, and his discourse made the same impression.

It was lamentable to remark the difference between his former deportment in the streets and his appearance in the

MR. GEORGE WOODFALL. The name of Woodfall will always rank high in my esteem and gratitude, particularly that branch of the family which I now introduce. He was the son of my old friend Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, formerly chief proprietor of "The Public Advertiser," at that time the principal public journal, and, as a proof of its decided superiority, the vehicle which Junius had preferred to communicate his productions to the world at large. It could not have been merely the high estimation in which "The Public Advertiser" was held at the period in question, which induced him to make this honourable selection, but because he must have known something of the firmness, public spirit, and inflexible integrity of Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall. However that may be, it is certain that though Junius might have known him, he did not know Junius, and hence the preference which Junius gave him is the more honourable to my old friend. But to the credit of Mr. H. S. Woodfall, though it was generally supposed that Junius

coach the last time I saw him, when he was going to suffer the sentence of the law. In the streets he walked with his head erect and with a lofty gait, like a man conscious of his own importance, and perhaps of the dignity of his sacred calling. In the coach he had sunk down with his head to the side, his face pale, while his features seemed to be expanded: his eyes were closed, and he appeared a wretched spectacle of despair. The crowd of people in Holborn, where I saw him pass, was immense, and a deep sense of pity seemed to be the universal feeling. I was young and adventurous, or I should not have trusted myself in so vast a multitude; sympathy had repressed every tendency towards disorder, even in so varied and numerous a mass of people.

Dr. Dodd, on the day when he was taken into custody, had engaged to dine with the late Chevalier Ruspini, in Pall Mall.

had intrusted him with his name, as well as with his productions, Mr. Woodfall never affected to know the author, directly or indirectly ; and I remember when I once met him at dinner at the house of Mr. Harris, the late chief proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, and Junius became the subject of conversation, I observed that Junius must be dead, for that so many topics of constitutional importance had occurred since he last wrote, that he would have been induced to come forward again if he were alive. Mr. Woodfall then said, "I hope and trust he is not dead, as I think he would have left me a legacy, for though I derived much honour from his preference, I suffered much by the freedom of his pen." These were his very words, and the blunt integrity of his manner fully confirmed his previous declaration, in the same company, that he was really ignorant of the author.

I had been an anonymous correspondent with Mr. H. S. Woodfall some years, merely in gratification of my political principles and feelings, without his

He had arrived some time before the hour appointed, and soon after two persons called and enquired for him, and when he went to them, he was informed that they had come to secure him on a criminal charge. The doctor apologised to the chevalier for the necessity of leaving him so abruptly, and desired that he would not wait dinner for him. Soon after dinner a friend of the chevalier called, and said he had just left the city, and informed the company that Dr. Dodd had been committed to prison on a charge of forgery. I was present at the sale of his effects at his house in Argyle Street. During the sale a large table in the drawing-room was covered with private letters to the doctor, all open, and some signed by many noblemen and distinguished characters. I presume these letters were to be sold in one lot, but I did not stay till the conclusion of the sale.

knowing from whom he derived my communications, but a youthful messenger whom I once sent with a letter, met him at his own door, and being asked from whom he came, mentioned my name. I then thought it necessary to let him know who was his correspondent, and from that period avowed to him all my humble contributions to his journal.

At a later period I became acquainted with his son, Mr. George Woodfall, the subject of my present notice, who, at the period alluded to, must have been nearly a boy. However, it has been my good fortune to become intimate with him at his own and other hospitable tables, particularly at that of Mr. Alderman Crowder.

Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall presented to me the first collection of the Works of Junius, corrected by the author, with a kind of inscription from himself; and when his son George brought forth his large edition in three volumes, including all the private letters of Junius, he paid me the same gratifying compliment. Previous, however, to this compliment, he paid me one much higher, in requesting that I would look over the files of "The Public Advertiser," before the year 1769, in order to see if there were any works of Junius previous to his signature under that name. I did so, and found a letter signed "Publicola," which, in the style and the whole scheme of the composition of Junius, was obviously written by the same hand, though not with the neat and polished language which afterwards characterised those letters that excited the attention and admiration of the public, and which will always rank among the chief productions of British literature. There

was also a short letter signed Junius, but which Mr. H. S. Woodfall did not include in the first collection.

When, by the treachery of a partner, I was deprived of the property which I had employed a great part of my life in acquiring, and was thrown upon the world, at an advanced age, without resource, Mr. George Woodfall, as soon as he heard of my misfortune, desired Mr. Alexander Chalmers to tell me, that if I would publish my poems by subscription, he would print them for me at *cost price*; and, of course, I accepted his generous offer. He, Mr. A. Chalmers, Mr. William Nicol, the son of my old and worthy friend, the late Mr. George Nicol, of Pall Mall, formed a kind of committee, arranged matters, and issued proposals for the publication, and exerted themselves to procure subscribers, after having liberally subscribed themselves. My old friend Mr. Freeling, now Sir Francis, kindly consented to join this amicable committee, but there was no occasion to call him from his important duties. Messrs. Paine and Foss, Longman, Rees, Orme and Co., J. Richardson, and J. Murray, obligingly received subscriptions, and the work was brought forward with all due expedition. One volume only was proposed to the subscribers, but vanity, pride, and folly, which indeed all mean the same thing, tempted me to bring forth all the trifles I had written, and extend it to two, not reflecting that I thereby not only reduced my profits greatly, but gave additional trouble to Mr. George Woodfall, as well as much increased my obligation to him. He, however, in the true spirit of friendship, disregarded the increased trouble and intrusion upon his press, and only regretted, on my

account, that I had thus lessened the pecuniary advantage which I might otherwise have derived from so extensive and so honourable a list of subscribers. It remains for me to say, that perhaps a more correct work, so far as relates to typography, never issued from the English or any other press.

To return for a few moments to Junius, a writer who, for his zeal for the British constitution, and the spirit and elegance with which he defended it, deserves to be classed among its strongest champions,—it must be acknowledged that he was inconsistent and cruel in the manner in which he mentioned our revered Sovereign George the Third. Sometimes Junius speaks of that amiable monarch as possessing the best of hearts, and sometimes as one of the basest men in the kingdom, though he was unable to bring any positive charge against the king, that, if justly founded, was not rather applicable to his ministers.

George the Third was a quiet, domestic, and benignant monarch. He was fond of the fine arts, and was a liberal patron of them. To his liberality we owe the Royal Academy, to which we are indebted for that progress in national taste which has rendered the British school of painting superior to that of any other country. He was accused of being obstinate with respect to the American war; but that reputed obstinacy may more justly be considered as a true sense of the dignity of his crown, and firmness in supporting it, that he might maintain the honour of the empire, and transmit it unimpaired to his successors. I heard the great Lord Chatham say in the House of Lords on this subject, as I have mentioned in another place, addressing the advocates for

American independence, "Would you disinherit the Prince of Wales of his legitimate possessions?" And surely His Majesty had a right to try to retain the full extent of his dominions. What would the world have thought, and what would history have said, if George the Third had surrendered America, without a struggle, to a set of men who at that period appeared to be only a band of ambitious demagogues, who made their opposition to the Government at home the ground of their own aspirations to lead in a republic? Granting that it was a hopeless attempt to recover the submission of the American colonies, still that attempt was the act of his ministers, and they are not very sound statesmen who can only form their judgments when the events are before them. But this important question is now effectually settled. America seems to be under a wise and resolute government, which, however, no political sagacity could possibly anticipate or predict; and it is probable that both countries will be benefited by the separation, while they exist in independence and in friendship with each other. I, therefore, cannot but condemn Junius for his virulence and gross personality against a monarch, who, feeling the dignity of his station, was anxious to support and to retain the whole of his empire, for the advantage of his country as well as from his own conscientious sense of duty, and also as a monarch to whom was entrusted the honour and welfare of his empire.

Junius was, therefore, in a dilemma, for if he thought that the ministers acted solely according to the uncontrollable will of the monarch, his attacks should have been confined to the monarch; but if he thought that the monarch, whose private virtues he

acknowledged, submitted to the judgment and discretion of his ministers, his censure should wholly have been addressed to them. But the wisest men are limited in their faculties, and can only act according to existing circumstances and probable prospects; and that consideration will excuse, if not justify, the opposition to American independence.

There is this insuperable obstacle in the way of all attempts to discover the author of Junius: he says "I am the sole depositary of my own secret, and *it shall perish with me.*" Therefore, if he were to avow himself, he could not expect to be credited, and nothing but a succession of letters, written with equal spirit, vigour, knowledge, and satirical severity, could support his pretensions. My friend Mr. Richardson informed me that Charles Fox and Mr. Sheridan thought lightly of Junius, and said that there was as good writing every day in the newspapers. The public evidently think otherwise, for, though the reputation of these celebrated compositions has been assigned to many individuals, public confidence has not been attached to any of them.

My friend Dr. Kelly, of Finsbury Square, published a tract, in order to prove that Burke was the author, and cited many parallel passages from acknowledged works of Burke, comparing them with extracts from Junius, yet they are not of so striking a similarity as to decide the question. Junius, in recommending a union among the opponents of Government who had differences among themselves, says, "I would accept a simile from Mr. Burke, and a sarcasm from Colonel Barry." This was written while Mr. Burke was in the zenith of his reputation, and can it then be supposed that if he were Junius, he would have

mentioned himself in a manner bordering on contempt, as if he could offer nothing better than a simile as an orator and a politician? As to the opinion of Charles Fox and Mr. Sheridan respecting the merit of the letters, even granting that the public journals contain productions of great excellence, which cannot, indeed, be denied, yet it must be admitted that Junius set the example of a style which improved the English language, and has been imitated by most succeeding writers on similar topics.

It has been said that Dr. Johnson gave a dignity to the language, but it may be justly observed, that his style has never been imitated in the same degree as that of Junius, and has even been often charged with being pompous, turgid, inflated, and disproportionate to the sentiments which he intended to express. Dr. Johnson's remark, that in Junius there was more of the venom of the shaft than the vigour of the bow, is not an accurate description, for it is hardly possible for language to be stronger than that of Junius, when he puts forth all his vigour. It has been observed that Junius never attacked Dr. Johnson, and from his silence in that respect, it has been inferred that Burke was the author, and, therefore, spared Dr. Johnson as a friend; but Burke was so irritable a man that he would have spared nobody, even as an avowed author. The violence and virulence of his temper were evident in his separation from Charles Fox, with whom he had for many years been upon terms of the closest intimacy and friendship, though Fox was so affected as to shed tears on the occasion; and Burke afterwards wrote a pamphlet against Fox, accusing him of treason, on the subject of Mr. Adair's mission to Russia, as the

imputed ambassador to the empress from Charles Fox and his party.

But with respect to the forbearance of Junius towards Dr. Johnson, it may reasonably be supposed that he alluded to Johnson when he mentioned "the learned dullness of declamation," and had no occasion to appear in more direct opposition to the great moralist and politician ; if he had attacked him, however, it is by no means probable that he would have sunk under the weight of the ponderous lexicographer.

It has been said that it was in the power of Burke to imitate any style, and his pamphlet in the manner of Lord Bolingbroke has been mentioned as affording a proof that he was master of the language, and could therefore easily assume that of Junius ; but it was not so much the language of Lord Bolingbroke that he imitated, as his lordship's mode of reasoning, for there is not so marked a character in his style as in his argument and the general tendency of his compositions. Perhaps, too, if Burke's pamphlet had not been brought forward as an avowed resemblance of the manner of Lord Bolingbroke, it never would have appeared in that light to the public. Besides, when Junius wrote his first letter, which bears no resemblance to the style of Burke, he had no reason to apprehend that he should be drawn into a controversy which would render it necessary for him to conceal himself from the world at large, and oblige him to assume a style different from his own, as would have been the case if Burke had been the author. "Style," says Gibbon, "is the image of character," and Burke's natural style was too diffuse, flowery, and metaphorical to represent

such a character as might be supposed to attach to Junius, who is shrewd, compact, neat, and pointed.

But of all the absurd attempts to discover Junius, that of Mr. Philip Thicknesse was the most hopeless and improbable, who published a pamphlet to prove that Mr. Horne Tooke was the author, as if Mr. Horne Tooke would assume an anonymous character to triumph over himself: to say nothing of the laboured accuracy of his style compared with that of Junius, besides many other considerations that must occur to every reflecting mind. I have mentioned in another place that Mr. Horne Tooke told me that he knew the author of Junius thirty years after Junius ceased to write, and when he could hardly have had any reason for concealment.

My old friend Mr. Boaden, a gentleman well known and justly respected in the literary world, has devoted much attention to the subject of Junius, and at one time was disposed to give the palm to Mr. Gibbon, and has cited many passages from both writers which bear a strong resemblance to each other. Mr. Boaden addressed the late Lord Sheffield in a letter, and cited those parallel passages. His lordship returned a very polite answer, but, though he differed from Mr. Boaden, and intimated that he knew Mr. Gibbon was not Junius, yet his lordship did not offer any strong reason to support his positive negation. That Mr. Gibbon had a power of sarcasm and a force of eloquence sufficient to justify Mr. Boaden's surmise, is evident; but considering the benevolence of Mr. Gibbon's character, and the suavity of his manner, it may be doubtful whether he would ever have written with the virulence

and asperity which may often be discovered in the letters of Junius.

I attended the late Dr. William Hunter's lectures on anatomy at the same time that Mr. Gibbon and Dr. Adam Smith were fellow pupils, and heard much of the conversation which passed between the former and Dr. Hunter; for Mr. Gibbon, at the end of every lecture, used to leave his seat to thank the doctor for the pleasure and instruction which he had received. The mild, courteous, polite, and affable manners which Mr. Gibbon on these occasions manifested, were very different from those which may be supposed to have animated the mind of Junius; to say nothing of the piety of Junius occasionally, which will hardly be attributed to the sceptical historian.

CHAPTER XIX.

THOUGH I have mentioned Mr. Sheridan under a particular head, yet as I write without method, and as matters casually occur to my memory, I shall insert them as they present themselves. If I did not seize these scattered recollections they would perhaps never recur.

Mr. Sheridan was one of our great men, and will not only live in dramatic annals, but be recorded in the history of the country. His errors as well as his good qualities should be known, that they who may emulate his merits may also avoid his faults. He is a proof how a mind originally proud, delicate, and

honourable, may be warped and injured by adversity, which often sours the temper and corrupts the heart. Almost all his errors may be imputed to his necessities, which destroyed the balance of his mind. His talents raised him into a rank which he had not the means of supporting. When sober, he was cheerful and good-humoured. When he had drunk too much, he sometimes became misanthropic, splenetic, ready, and almost eager, to offend. Our mutual friend, Joe Richardson, who was a penetrating observer and knew Sheridan better than any body, said that in his sullen fits he "would search his mind for the bitterest things that he could conceive," and freely give vent to them against the person at whom his temporary pique, or rather anger, might be directed. But this was the result of those pecuniary difficulties which compelled his pride to submit to obligation.

I will only mention one instance of this unfortunate disposition, which occurred at a time of convivial excess, that happened at Kelly's saloon in Pall Mall, which Kelly kindly concealed, but which I learned from Richardson. On this occasion he had taken offence against the late Mr. John Kemble, and had assailed him in the most bitter manner. Kemble had borne this venomous hostility for some time with great patience, and had pushed round the bottle in hopes that Sheridan might be tempted to drink away his anger; but finding that, as the lion lashes himself into fury, so Sheridan's rancour seemed to increase, unable to bear the provocation any longer, Kemble seized a decanter and threw it at Sheridan, who luckily turned his head aside and escaped a blow which might otherwise have been

fatal. The company then interfered, Sheridan apologized for his ill-humour, and as they were really both liberal-minded and good-natured men, they went out soon after in perfect amity together.

Sheridan was indeed good-natured, and if he had been a man of fortune would not only have been a man of nice honour, as Richardson said of him, but have been a liberal patron and a generous friend. I met him one day while the naval mutiny spread a general alarm, when Mr. Canning had styled him the "glorious exception" from the revolutionary principles of his party; and, alluding to his conduct in parliament, which had procured him this honourable distinction, he said "Well, Taylor, though our politics differ, what do you think of me now?" "Why," said I, "it is possible for people to condemn in public what they privately encourage." "Now," said he, "that's very unhandsome." "What!" rejoined I, "you, the great wit of the age, not take a joke?" "Oh," said he, recovering his good humour in a moment, "a joke, is it? Well, it is, however, the dullest I ever heard, and I am sorry you have no better, but I shall be glad to see you at Polesden."

Having been annoyed by the appearance of flying spots on the paper when he read or wrote, he sent to me, requesting that I would call on him and give him my opinion upon the subject. As I was going I met Mr. Courteney, the Irish wit, who was long the Momus of the House of Commons. Hearing I was going to look at Sheridan's eyes, he asked the reason. I told him that Sheridan complained of flying spots before them, which were called *muscæ-volantes*."

“No,” said Mr. Courteney, “with Sheridan they should be called *vino-volantes*.”

Mr. Sheridan asked me one morning to attend the rehearsal of Hamlet by Mr. Foote, a nephew of my old friend Jessé Foote, the popular surgeon. I went to the theatre and concealed myself in one of the upper boxes until the rehearsal ended, and then joined Mr. Sheridan on the stage. I afterwards wrote an introductory address for Mr. Foote. Mr. Foote, as well as I can recollect, recited the first speech of Richard the Third, and was kindly encouraged by Mr. Sheridan. In the course of conversation, I asked Mr. Sheridan what he thought of Garrick's Richard. He said it was very fine, but in his opinion not terrible enough. I mentioned this opinion to Mrs. Siddons, and she exclaimed, “Good God! what could be more terrible?” She then told me, that when she was rehearsing the part of Lady Anne to Garrick's Richard, in the morning, he desired that when at night he led her from the sofa, she would follow him step by step, as he said he did a great deal with his face, and wished not to turn it from the audience; but such was the terrific impression which his acting produced upon her, that she was too much absorbed to proceed, and obliged him, therefore, to turn his back, on which he gave her such a terrible frown, that she was always disturbed when she recollected it.

During the agitation of the first Regency bill, when Lord Loughborough so unluckily involved the opposition in legal difficulty, which the presence of mind and sound wisdom of Mr. Pitt rendered insuperable, I became, by a circumstance of some importance in the political world at that time, the conductor of

“The Morning Post.” It appeared that a lady, supposed to be in great favour with a high personage, and not merely connected by the *ties of mutual affection*, had determined to assert claims not sanctioned by law, but which if openly developed, or rather promulgated, would, perhaps, have been attended by a national agitation. It was stated in “The Morning Post,” rather as rumour than assertion, that the lady in question had demanded a peerage and 6000*l.* a year, as a requital for her suppression of a fact which might have excited alarm over the empire, and have put an effectual stop to all farther proceedings on the subject of the pending regency.

I was engaged merely as the dramatic critic for “The Morning Post” at that time, and was on intimate terms with a confidential servant of the high personage alluded to. This confidential servant sent to me, and when I went to him he assured me that there was not the least foundation for the paragraph in question, and requested that I would convey this assurance to the person who had *farmed* the paper from the chief proprietor. I told him I was convinced that such a communication would have no effect, or rather a contrary effect, for that, finding the subject had made an impression, it would certainly be followed by articles of the same nature and tendency, and that silence was the best policy. The person alluded to did not seem to be convinced by my reasoning, and determined to consult people more likely to form a better judgment; yet he desired me in the mean time to convey the assurance which he had given. I did so, and, as I expected, there was next day a stronger allusion to the same mysterious and alarming event. The same confidential agent

then satisfied of the propriety of the advice which I had first given, asked me if I thought that the *farmer* of the paper, who was also a proprietor, would dispose of the period for which he was authorized to conduct it, and of his share in the paper; and I was desired to make the requisite enquiry. I did so, and as the *farmer* possessed no literary talents, and "The Morning Post" had sunk under his management into a very different state from its present fashionable interest and political importance, he was glad of the opportunity of relieving himself from a weight which he had not strength enough to carry. He, therefore, struck the iron while it was hot, received a large sum for his share of the paper, another for the time that he was to hold a control over it, and an annuity for life. Such was the importance attached to this mysterious secret: "The Morning Post" was purchased for the allotted period, and I was vested with the editorship. I may here mention a circumstance that illustrates the character, or rather the opinion of Dr. Wolcot. When the confidential agent to whom I have alluded first communicated to me the extravagant claims of the lady in question, and the public commotion which she was likely to occasion if she persevered in her pretensions; the doctor, who was present, laughed, and said "Oh! there is no reason to be alarmed, the matter is easily settled." When I asked him what was to be done, his answer was, "Why poison her." "What!" said I, "doctor, commit murder?" "Murder!" rejoined he, "there is nothing in it; it is state policy, and is always done." Though the doctor said this with jocularity, yet such was the impression that history had made on his mind, and such his opinion of all foreign courts,

that having very unfavourable ideas of mankind in general, he might indeed impute the probability of such a practice to our own court. He certainly had no intention to suggest such an expedient upon the present occasion; but if there was any temptation for a joke, it was impossible for him to resist it.

I held the situation of editor for about two years, as far as I can recollect; but as the chief proprietor, from whom it had been farmed, not only disapproved of my editorship, but, as he said, "thought "I had not devil enough for the conduct of a public journal," and frequently expressed his discontent, and as the great business which had occasioned the purchase had passed by, I signified my readiness to relinquish the management, and two young Irishmen were introduced as my successors. Knowing the dashing spirit of the Irish character, I advised the printer, who received a weekly sum to be responsible for the contents of the paper, to be careful what he inserted. He assured me with thanks that he should be cautious; but the result was, that soon after he was confined in Newgate during twelve months for the insertion of a libel, and an action was brought against the proprietor himself for another on a lady of quality, which subjected him to three thousand pounds damages, and enormous law expenses. He then, I heard, in the bitterness of his heart, lamented that he "had ever parted with Mr. Taylor." To add to his misfortune, the lady in question subsequently gave occasion to a suspicion that the original charge against her was not without foundation. Whether, with a due sense of morality, he regretted more her imputed desertion from virtue

than the loss of his money, I never thought it necessary to enquire.

As to the mysterious transaction which led to this extraordinary purchase, it indeed was understood, that the distinguished female in question received a recompense for withholding her demands, adequate to the full extent of her ambitious pretensions. It may amuse the reader to say a few words more respecting the proprietor of "The Morning Post," who disgusted me so much as to induce me to resign a profitable engagement, because my conduct of the paper was contrary to his opinions, if he was able to form any.

It was urged in mitigation of damages in his defence to the action brought against him for the libel on the lady of quality, that he never interfered in the management of the paper, but purchased a share in it, merely as he would do to farm the post-horse duties, or to be concerned in any mercantile speculation. The truth however is, that he was always interfering, and before the time that I have mentioned as having myself been appointed the editor, the person to whom he had surrendered the whole control of the paper had employed the Rev. Mr. Jackson, afterwards so well known, and who was tried in Dublin for treasonable practices, to write the leading articles for "The Morning Post." Mr. Jackson was a very able writer, and gave such a variety to his political compositions as rendered them very amusing, as well as expressive. He generally wrote in a very large hand, upon very large sheets of paper, which appeared like maps, or atlases, spread over the table.

The proprietor in question, unexpectedly entering the room one evening, suddenly retreated in dismay, and afterwards observed that Mr. Jackson should be dismissed, otherwise he would ruin the property by the vast quantity of paper which he consumed in writing his political articles.

He had been prepared with a lesson to complain of my management of the paper, but unluckily had not memory sufficient to retain his task. Among other complaints, he told me that the paper was wholly confined to politics, and had none of those little *antidotes* which had before diverted the readers. The poor, or rather, indeed, rich man, had doubtless *anecdotes* strongly impressed upon his mind, but not understanding the meaning of the word, it is not wonderful that he should have forgotten the sound. His late majesty, when Prince of Wales, once dined with this person at his country seat, and having observed that the wine was very good, "Yes," said his wise landlord, "it is very good, but I have better in my cellar." "Oh!" said the Prince, "then I suppose you keep it for better company." This rebuke, however, was quite unintelligible to "mine host," who did not think of sending for a bottle of his superior vintage.

While I conducted the "The Morning Post," the evenings passed pleasantly at the office. Dr. Wolcot was a constant visiter, and generally wrote some whimsical articles for the paper. Mr. Merry, generally known by his poetical designation of Della Crusca, was a frequent visiter, and he and I used to scribble verses in conjunction. Mr. Billington also, the first husband of the celebrated syren, a man of great humour, often enlivened the society by hu-

morous remarks, and anecdotes of the musical and fashionable circles. Yet the business of the paper was not neglected, for I have often remained at the office till three o'clock, to revise, correct, and guard against the accidental insertion of any improper article, moral or political.

I endeavoured all I could to procure a regular salary for Dr. Wolcot, having a high opinion of his inventive powers and humour, but the surly proprietor was taught to be afraid of the freedom of his muse. I even offered the doctor half of my weekly salary, but neither his pride nor his delicacy would permit him to assent, and he still supplied his gratuitous effusions, chiefly of the poetical kind. We were plentifully supplied with punch, the doctor's favourite beverage, and as far as our limited party admitted, the meeting might be considered as Comus's Court. This literary and convivial revelry continued nearly to the end of the two years during which I held the editorship of "The Morning Post." Here I feel myself under the painful necessity of mentioning my quondam friend Merry in a manner unfavourable to his character, and distressing to my feelings, as notwithstanding his treatment of me, I really regarded him almost as a brother, and still feel towards him an affectionate regret.

He had requested me to endeavour to induce the late Mr. Harris, then chief proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, to renew his wife's engagement. Mr. Harris said that he should be very glad to re-engage her at his theatre, but that he was persuaded he should be subject to attacks from her husband in the newspapers, unless she was allowed to perform every character she liked, and to be provided with

the most expensive dresses. He desired me to get him out of the dilemma, which he deemed the application to be, and to say that his company was too abundantly supplied with performers in general to admit of any more. I endeavoured to satisfy Merry with this answer, but in vain ; he expressed much discontent with the rejection of the lady, and I have reason to believe that Mr. Harris was in consequence the subject of his newspaper hostility.

When this negotiation failed, Mr. Merry requested that I would write to Mr. Stephen Kemble, who was related to me by marriage, and then the manager of the theatre at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and try to procure an engagement for Mrs. Merry. I did so, but, pending this new negotiation, there appeared in an obscure evening newspaper called "The Telegraph," and long since defunct, a violent attack upon me, not mentioning my name, but alluding to me in my profession of oculist. The cause of this attack was an account of the representation of "Venice Preserved," which vehemently censured the democratical principles that were inculcated by Pierre and his fellow *reformers*. This account appeared in a daily paper, also now defunct, entitled "The True Briton," of which I was then a proprietor.

Merry perhaps suspected that the account was written by me, but he was, if so, mistaken, for though I was one of the proprietors of the paper, the conductor at that time was the late John Gifford, Esq. afterwards one of the police magistrates. Conscious of my integrity, and not ashamed of my attachment to the political principles and judicious administration of the glorious William Pitt, I did not think it necessary to take any notice of the

anonymous libel, but many of my friends thought otherwise, and observed, that if I remained wholly silent, I should be thought to acquiesce in the truth of the charges. I therefore applied by letter to the editor of the paper, an Irishman named M'Donnell, whom I had known before, requiring the name of the author, expressing my suspicion that the libel upon me had been written by a known defamatory author of that time. M'Donnell affected to consider it as an insult that I supposed he could be acquainted with such a character as I described, and therefore replied that the matter ought now to be settled between him and me. Considering this hostile intimation as an attempt to evade my farther endeavours to discover the writer, I laughed at his implied proposition, and assured him that I should resort to the law, not to the field for a decision. Finding me resolute, he relaxed from his martial menaces, was very civil, and assured me that before the end of a month I should know the author.

Previous to this application, as M'Donnell had entered the Temple as a barrister, I examined the entry to procure his Christian name, that I might be prepared for a prosecution, and in my letter, I addressed him to the full extent of his Christian and surname, to alarm him as to the possible consequences. To my utter astonishment, at the end of about a week, I received a letter from Merry, acknowledging himself to be the author of the libel upon the man who at that very time was endeavouring to serve him by procuring an engagement for his wife. I received this acknowledgment rather "in sorrow than in anger," and admiring Merry for his genius, his humour, and his learning, thought of

taking no other notice of his letter, than to show it to our mutual friends for my own justification. I may as well, however, insert the libel, in order to show the full extent of treachery, malice, and ingratitude, which characterized the whole transaction.

“A QUERE.—Who is the man that can violate every principle of private confidence? Who is the man that can sacrifice every principle of public virtue to the most sordid self-interest? Who is the man that, without remorse, can disturb the tranquillity of domestic happiness? Who is the man that, without mercy or common decency, can wound the peace of every honest individual? Who is the man that is false to his friends, inimical to the *liberties* of his country, the slanderer of all *merit*, the panegyrist of all *infamy*? Who is the most *venal*, the most *shameless*, the most *savage* of mankind? The enemy of *hope*, the advocate of *despair*? IT IS THE REPTILE OCULIST. *Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.*”

I revive this elaborate and atrocious libel, because I am conscious that it is in every point wholly inapplicable to me, and because it is a striking illustration of the malignity to which human nature may be reduced. While Merry was a man of fortune, which was before I knew him, I have heard from good judges that he was liberal, open-hearted, and benevolent; but he had exhausted his fortune, and it was said that he was chiefly supported by an English lady of quality in Florence, till the lady had formed a connexion with a person of the highest rank in his dominions abroad.

Merry was in France during the most frantic period of the French revolution, and had imbibed all the levelling principles of the most furious demo-

crat; having lost his fortune, and in despair, he would most willingly have promoted the destruction of the British Government, if he could have entertained any hopes of profiting in the general scramble for power.

To resume my story. In consequence of the apprehension of legal punishment for this unprovoked and malignant libel, the following article was inserted in "The Telegraph:"—"An article appeared in this paper of the fourth instant, under the title of a Quere, describing, in the grossest terms, the gentleman against whom it was directed. Those who know the hurry with which a newspaper is made up, will allow for the accidental insertion of offensive matter; and as such was the case in that instance, we have no hesitation in expressing our regret that the article in question was admitted, as we are fully convinced the gentleman alluded to is not a proper object for such an attack." This article appeared in "The Telegraph" of the 23rd of November, 1795. On the 30th of the same month, to my utter astonishment, I received the following letter from Mr. Merry, the last man on earth whom I should have suspected of having written the libel in question.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. M—— (M'Donnell) has informed me that you impute to me a paragraph which appeared some time ago in "The Telegraph." I will be candid with you and explain the matter. We had been drinking a great deal of wine, and in fact I was drunk. When "The True Briton" was produced, in which were some very cruel and malignant attacks on Mr. Barnes, Mr. Bannister, and another, the intent of

which appeared to strike at the life of the first mentioned gentleman, and at the professional interest of the latter, it was absolutely affirmed that you were the author. In consequence the obnoxious paragraph *was produced*, and I own that, heated as I was with wine, my indignation got the better of every other consideration, and I was *aiding* and *abetting* in the composition of the same. I really, however, never felt more hurt or confounded than when I saw it on the following day—and being now perfectly convinced that you were not the author of the paragraph which had so exasperated us, I do most willingly and sincerely beg your pardon for the part I took in the transaction, and hope you will forgive me, and endeavour to forget it. You cannot suppose that I could wish to hurt you in any way, *as I have never received any unkindness from you; on the contrary, have always found you ready to do me any good office in your power.* I again repeat, that I am truly concerned at what has happened, and that I never will be induced to act in any manner by you but as your friend and well-wisher. Believe me, I feel the truest regard for you, and am sincerely and affectionately yours,

R. M.

November 30, 1795.

In the first place it is proper to observe, that a letter from the editor of "The Telegraph" assured me that he received the libel in question not from a *party*, as Mr. Merry's letter imports, but from *an individual*. In the next, that I knew nothing of the Mr. Barnes, mentioned in the letter, but remember that a person of that name had been suspected of

having fired an air-gun at our revered monarch George the Third, about that period. As to Mr. Bannister, (junior,) I had the pleasure to be acquainted with him early in life, and was so zealous in supporting him, that his father never met me without saying, "I am at all times glad to see you as you have been always Jack's friend." Finally, I repeat, that I was not the author of the paragraph that Mr. Merry states to have been the cause of his furious attack upon me.

What adds to the wonder of this extraordinary transaction, a short time before, at Mr. Merry's desire, I wrote the prologue to his tragedy entitled "Lorenzo," to preserve the memory of our friendship, and, to use his own words, "that we might go down to posterity together." I had determined to take no notice of Mr. Merry's letter, but meeting my old and valued friend Sir William Beechey, at the house of the late Mr. George Dance, architect and R.A. Sir William strenuously advised me to publish it in defence of my character. I did so, with an account of the whole transaction, which I circulated among my friends. After this publication I received another letter from Mr. Merry, soliciting a renewal of our intercourse, and that we might "shake hands in amity." Of this letter of course I took no notice, but had soon after the mortification of seeing him on the opposite side of the way in Marlborough Street, looking at me as he passed with the aspect of dejection and dismay.

Poor Merry, I was proud of his friendship! When I review what I have written respecting him, I cannot but apprehend that I may be thought to harbour too much resentment against an old friend, for whom I have acknowledged that I

felt a sincere regard as well as admiration; but his anonymous attack upon me was so bitter, so minute, and so comprehensive, that I cannot but fear also it may have had some effect upon my character with those who do not know me, and though conscious of integrity, and "a conscience void of offence," yet I am by no means indifferent to reputation. On such occasions, therefore, self-defence I consider as a duty which I owe to the world at large, particularly as during my long life I have been generally known.

To show the regard which I felt for Merry, I will introduce a few stanzas from a poem which I addressed to him, in order to attract public attention to his tragedy of "Lorenzo," which was soon after represented at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden. After noticing in my poem many of his productions, and praising them highly, I concluded with the following stanzas :

Say, dost thou, fondly charm'd along
By Fancy's wild and witching song,
With moon-light shadows seek repose,
The world forgetting and its woes?

Does sorrow linger o'er thy lyre,
And sadly chill the conscious wire?
Does love the pensive hour invade,
And absence veil the darling maid?
Has malice, perfidy, or pride,
Struck deep in friendship's bleeding side?
Long since thy piercing eye could scan
"The low ingratitude of man."*

Lo! Fame her fairest wreath assigns,
While Love delighted chaunts thy lines,
Oh! then resume thy melting song,
And charm the willing world along.

* A line in one of Merry's poems.

Fortunately for my reputation, I have the testimony of many in my favour, as I may subsequently show, and among others, the following inscription in a volume entitled "The Beauties of the Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner," a work instituted by the late Mr. Canning, of which he and my late friend Mr. William Gifford were the chief writers, and the latter was the editor. On the close of "The Anti-Jacobin Examiner," Mr. John Gifford, the magistrate, was favoured with all the unprinted manuscripts intended for that work, which was only to last during the pending session of Parliament, and upon those manuscripts Mr. John Gifford founded "The Anti-Jacobin Magazine," which he conducted with great vigour on true constitutional principles. He, however, selected and published the beauties of the former work, and the volume which he sent to me contained the following inscription in his own hand-writing.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

From the Editor, with the best wishes that the sincerest friendship can suggest, and the most benevolent of hearts excite."

Mr. John Gifford was the author of "A History of France," some admirable "Letters to the Earl of Lauderdale" during the French revolution, "The Life of Mr. Pitt," in six volumes, and many other political works of great merit. In "The Anti-Jacobin Review," there appeared a very severe note upon Dr. Wolcot. Not knowing that there were two Mr. Giffords, and confused between "The Anti-Jacobin Examiner" and "The Anti-Jacobin Re-

view," the doctor thought that the bitter note was written by Mr. William Gifford and therefore proceeded with great haste to the shop of Mr. Wright, the bookseller, in Piccadilly, which Mr. W. Gifford was in the habit of frequenting. The doctor on entering, observing Gifford, whose person he had seen before, said, "Are you Mr. Gifford?" and without waiting for an answer, struck him immediately on the head. Gifford was strong in the arm, wrested the weapon from him, and struck him in return; a scuffle ensued, and the doctor lost his hat and wig, which were thrown to him after he had been pushed into the street.

I passed the house soon after this fracas had happened, and saw some drops of blood upon the shop-window, which I was told were the effects of Mr. Gifford's blow. The doctor, however, though he "lost some claret," to use the technical term of the *Fancy*, received no essential injury. This violent contest induced Mr. Gifford to write his severe poem, addressed to Peter Pindar; and also Dr. Alexander Geddes, a poet and a scholar, to publish a poem, entitled "The Battle of the Bards." Dr. Geddes published a translation, rather of a doggrel kind, of Horace, and a specimen of a translation of the Bible, and in which he introduced some modern phrases, such as that Jephtha's daughter was a "fine girl," and others of an equally familiar description. I afterwards explained to Dr. Wolcot his mistake in confounding the two Giffords, and attacking the wrong one. When the matter was understood by both parties, all enmity was at an end. I succeeded in making them send amicable inquiries as to the

health of each other, which I conveyed with pleasure, as I did between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Jerningham, who had written against each other.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR YORKE. The early elevation of this eminent lawyer to the highest legal office in the British empire, and the loss which the nation suffered by his death soon after his appointment, gave occasion to some unfounded surmises and malignant rumours, which, no doubt, derived additional strength and currency from an implied charge on his Majesty George the Third, brought by Junius, and which at the time gained a degree of credit with the public at large. Junius, referring to these rumours, in a note to his thirty-sixth letter, addressed to the Duke of Grafton, seems to admit them as well-founded, and promises to give the particulars of the supposed transaction, but he did not keep that promise; and as it cannot be imagined that Junius wanted information, or that his vindictive spirit was softened by time, it may fairly be inferred that he thought the rumours alluded to were false and malevolent. If so, it was his duty to acquit the injured monarch of the charge which he had rashly brought against him. These rumours were, however, revived a few years ago; and, therefore, the sons of the lamented Lord Chancellor came forward, under the

natural impulse of duty and reverence, to vindicate the memory of their honoured father. As the subject is interesting, and may give occasion to erroneous statements, or mysterious insinuations, in the history of the reign of his Majesty George the Third, I feel it a duty of respect to the memory of that revered monarch, as well as of esteem for Admiral Sir Joseph Yorke, with whom I have for many years had the pleasure of being acquainted, to extract the following letter from the transitory columns of a public journal into these humble pages.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE MORNING CHRONICLE."

SIR,

It has only this day come to our knowledge, that a paragraph has appeared in your paper of Thursday last, part of which is stated to have been taken from a book lately published, entitled "Parkes's History of the Court of Chancery," (which neither ourselves, nor, as we believe, any of our friends have hitherto seen) purporting to relate to circumstances supposed to have attended the death of our father, Mr. Charles Yorke, in January 1770. It would be quite in vain, and useless in these days to complain of the publication of anecdotes of such a nature as this, after the lapse of nearly sixty years, calculated in the highest degree to wound the feelings of individuals and of whole families, without any attempt being made to ascertain the truth or falsehood, accuracy or inaccuracy, of the facts brought forward; and still less of the insertion, by the editors of the daily papers, of articles of intelligence borrowed from books which have passed through the press. We have, therefore, no complaint to make of such an

insertion by them, as far as they copy from the books; the authors of which are, of course, to be considered as responsible for what they have published. We think, however, that we *have a claim* on the *justice* of editors of the public papers, as having now given a far greater degree of publicity to a story which (but for its insertion in them) might have remained almost unnoticed, to give an equal degree of publicity to this our formal contradiction of it, when we state that the paragraph mentioned, is a most false, scandalous, and malignant calumny. But in particular, that part of it which contains an attack, at once so cruel and unmanly, on the memory of our late ever-to-be-lamented and honoured mother, is false and malignant in the highest degree. The lady thus libelled, died a few years ago, at the age of eighty, respected by all who knew her. Providentially, she had been withdrawn to a better world before such a vile and atrocious calumny appeared, or the knowledge of it must have killed her. Providentially, many still exist who well knew the superior excellence of her character and principles; and that she was wholly incapable of contemplating, even in idea, the possibility of such an action as that she has been charged with; who also know the fact, that when, after the fate of her ever regretted husband, she was earnestly solicited, and pressed to assent to the completion of the peerage intended for him, and which had passed through all the forms, except only the affixing the great seal, she positively refused it, and would never suffer the offer to be repeated to her.

London, Sunday evening,

May 11.

C. P. YORKE.

J. YORKE.

THE LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH. It is with no slight degree of pleasure that I include this venerable prelate among the number of my esteemed friends; his character is so highly rated for his learned theological works, that he may be considered as a distinguished pillar of the established church. I had the pleasure of knowing him about the year 1778, when I was introduced to him by his college friend, Joseph Richardson, so well known in the literary and political circles at a subsequent period. Another college friend I was introduced to at the same time, the Rev. Edward Robson.

Mr. Herbert Marsh, the present Bishop of Peterborough, was then distinguished for his pleasant spirit and good humour, and I lost sight of him for many years, but with Joe Richardson and Ned Robson I retained an intimacy till death deprived me of the friendship of both. Mr. Robson possessed literary talents and was a good poet. Before I knew him, he had been chaplain to a nobleman, whose name I do not recollect; finding that the daughter of this nobleman had conceived a partiality for him, he deemed it proper to resign his chaplaincy, that he might not be thought to give encouragement to the lady's favourable sentiments. When I first knew him, he was curate to Dr. Markham, the rector of Whitechapel church, and though he was upon the most friendly footing with the doctor, and dined with him almost every day, the doctor paid him the respect of sending a formal invitation every morning, which perhaps Mr. Robson, who was not without a sense of personal dignity, had deemed necessary.

For many years, till I first entered into the marriage state, in the year 1788, I was in the habit of

breakfasting every Monday morning with Mr. Robson, who then lived in Whitechapel, and I in Hatton Garden. Some days, after he had discharged his clerical duties, we passed the day together, dined in the vicinity of Covent Garden, and closed the evening at one of the theatres. I was indebted to him for much amusement and instruction, and of course feel a sincere respect for his memory. During this time Mr. Robson was appointed one of the magistrates of the Tower Hamlets; and I have heard that he was as strict in administering justice, as in the discharge of his ecclesiastical duties. He had, I understood, a small living in Nottinghamshire. He followed my example in wedlock, having married the daughter of a respectable tradesman in the neighbourhood; he survived his lady, who had been abroad and had qualified herself for the situation of governess in a private family, and was an accomplished woman.

I once took Colonel Frederick, the son of the King of Corsica to visit him, and Mr. Robson was much gratified by the accounts of places abroad, which the Colonel had visited at a former period. Mr. Robson was chaplain to the Vintners' Company, and I once passed a festive day with them on one of their annual celebrations.

To return to Mr. Marsh. He had, I understood, gone abroad, where he acquired the German language, and published some theological and political works in that language, which he afterwards translated himself into English and published. The political principles which he inculcated, were sound and constitutional, and his theological doctrines, by all accounts, orthodox and profound. A few years ago,

I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with him, after he had obtained his present episcopal dignity, and found that he retained all the pleasantry and good humour which characterised him in early life, without any abatement of that decorum which was suitable to his sacred function.

I hope his lordship will forgive me, if I here introduce two anecdotes which I had the pleasure of hearing him relate at his own table. Lord Sandwich, formerly at the head of the Admiralty, when any application was made to him to subscribe for the repairs of the church, or other matters in the neighbourhood of his country seat, always directed his name to be put down for ten guineas; but as his lordship was ten years in arrear, the churchwardens applied to him, requesting that he would discharge his engagement. Finding that they really expected payment, he laughingly said, "What! would you kill your decoy duck?" but perhaps, after having had his joke, he fulfilled their expectations.

The other anecdote related to the same noble lord. He had heard that a neighbouring gentleman, who was sometimes his guest, and who was a great gourmand, wore a waistcoat laced behind, so that when he had eaten to a certain extent, the pressure of the lace induced him to check his appetite. Lord Sandwich was desirous of seeing the back of the waistcoat, and therefore, when the glass had circulated freely, proposed a loyal toast, signifying, that it should be honoured by every man with his coat off. The shrewd gourmand, aware of his lordship's design, proposed that they should all take off their waistcoats to do honour to the toast; and as the proposition was not more absurd than the other, they as-

sented, and the man contrived to pull off his coat and waistcoat together, and huddled them so as to defeat the curiosity of his lordship. This story, though trifling in itself, will serve at least to show what follies even very intelligent men will commit in bacchanalian excesses ; and none can doubt the abilities of Lord Sandwich, whatever may be thought of his morals.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, ESQ. With the merits of this gentleman, who has struck out a line of original and natural poetry, which must rank his name very high among the bards of this country, I was well acquainted, and wished to know personally the author of such interesting compositions. To my surprise, conscious of my own unimportance, I received a letter from him many years ago, accompanied with two volumes of his "Lyrical Ballads ;" the letter imported a desire to know what impression his poems, written by an author living in rural retirement, had made upon a man living in the bustle of active life. It was not a little gratifying to me to find that I was known at all to a poet of such original merit, and residing at so distant a place. Not having immediately an opportunity of perusing the volumes, I wrote to him to acknowledge having received them, and expressing my belief that I should very soon have occasion to thank him for the pleasure which they had afforded me. Very soon after I took up the volumes, and was so much gratified by the impressive simplicity and original genius which characterized the whole, that I wrote to him again, to testify the pleasure which they had afforded me. In his answer, he expressed his satisfaction with the opinion which I had given of his work, and

after a little farther correspondence between us, I heard from him no more.

It is usual for the Royal Academicians to send an invitation to their patrons and friends, to view the annual exhibition a day or two before it is opened to the public ; when I had the command of a newspaper some years ago, I was favoured with a card, particularly from my late friend Mr. West, the president, but now I have lost all interest of that kind. On one of these occasions, as I was going up the stairs of the academy, I overtook Sir George Beaumont and a gentleman, whom he introduced to me as Mr. Wordsworth. I was very much gratified in seeing him, and he testified similar pleasure in seeing me, insomuch that we paid more attention to each other than to the pictures. Sir George invited me to dine with him, and to meet Mr. Wordsworth, and this invitation the worthy baronet frequently repeated while Mr. Wordsworth remained in town. I hardly need add, that these invitations were a source of more than amusement, as it would be strange indeed if I had not profited mentally by such enlightened society.

CHAPTER XXI.

The REV. CHARLES ESTE. This gentleman was not only the most extraordinary character whom I ever knew, but, perhaps, the most extraordinary of his time. He was educated for the church, but was more attached to the stage; and in a brief biography of himself, which he entitled "My own Life," he states that he had actually ventured on the stage, but, after a transient experiment, renounced all theatrical adventures, and devoted himself to the church. But though he abandoned the stage, his partiality for the theatrical profession continued, and he became connected with the most eminent actors of his time, particularly Henderson, who was perhaps the most general performer since the days of Garrick.

Feeling the possession of literary powers, he became, as was suspected, a correspondent of "The Public Advertiser," during the time of the late Henry Sampson Woodfall, who first gave the letters of Junius to the world. Mr. Woodfall was a well-educated man, a firm friend to the British constitution, and to the proper freedom of mankind. There was a blunt sincerity in his manner, which displayed the independence of his mind, his good sense, and his contempt of all affectation. It is by no means improbable that Junius knew the manliness of his character, and was induced on that ground to select him as the publisher of his letters, though he thought proper to conceal his name. In fact there was not,

at the period alluded to, any conductor of a public journal whose character stood so conspicuously and so honourably forward, as that of Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, for his brother, Mr. William Woodfall, did not come forth in a similar capacity till some years after the existence of "The Public Advertiser."

Mr. Este, like Junius, appeared anonymously, and was equally solicitous to conceal his name. Whether he at first offered himself as a writer for profit, cannot now be known ; but his compositions, though singular, and even whimsical in style, were of so original and of so amusing a description, that Mr. Woodfall found it expedient to engage him as an established correspondent.

The literary contributions of Mr. Este were chiefly on theatrical topics, but always blended with miscellaneous matters. He was well acquainted with mankind, and an acute critic on theatrical merit. His learning and extensive reading enabled him to supply an abundance of illustrative quotations, classical and modern. There was always point, humour, and judgment in his theatrical decisions, which were strikingly manifested, notwithstanding the peculiarity of his style, that often rendered his criticism unintelligible to those who had not attended to his manner. His style seemed to be founded on that of Sterne in his "Tristram Shandy," consisting of odd breaks, with lines interspersed, and whimsically compounded phrases, strongly studded with quotations, but always connected, forcible, and shrewd, in the opinion of those who thought proper to read his articles with attention. His style may be said to be a motley mixture of passages from the classics, from Shakspeare, from Pope, and from Doctor Johnson, mingled in a mass

with great native vigour and acuteness. His intimacy with Henderson induced him to be a warm panegyrist of that actor, whose talents fully justified his literary support.

On the death of Henderson, which was a severe loss to the public, Mr. Este attached himself to Mr. John Kemble, whose merits he then eulogized in "The Public Advertiser" with equal zeal, and a cordial friendship seemed to exist between them. Before the death of Henderson, however, it was evident that Mr. Este did not estimate the talents of Mr. Kemble as he did after that event; for in his commendations of Henderson, before he knew Mr. Kemble, there were sometimes in his strictures allusions to the comparative formality of Kemble's manner, which roused the friendly zeal of the late Mr. Francis Twiss, father of the present Mr. Horace Twiss, to take up the cause of Mr. Kemble; and as often as such allusions appeared from the pen of Mr. Este in "The Public Advertiser," they received implied answers from Mr. Twiss in "The Morning Chronicle," then conducted by Mr. William Woodfall. This sort of bush-fighting continued many weeks; at length, to the regret of all admirers of theatrical merit, poor Henderson died; Mr. Este then became known to the Kemble family, and was full as zealous in support of them, particularly of Mr. Kemble, as he had previously been hostile.

There was one female branch of the Kemble family upon whose acting Mr. Este, as supposed, had been very severe in his public strictures; and it so happened that the lady was afterwards married to Mr. Twiss, and of course some unpleasant feelings must have occurred to Mr. Este when he was first intro-

duced to that lady. To her honour, however, it should be mentioned, that, far from resenting any comments on her acting, though they had been remarkably severe, Mr. Este became one of her favourite friends.

I remember a circumstance connected with this subject, which appears to me to be worth relating. Mr. Twiss, though he entered into a covered controversy with Mr. Este in the public journals, as I have mentioned, was so great an admirer of the writings of Mr. Este, that he copied all the criticisms of that gentleman, amounting to rather extensive manuscripts, and containing all the bitter comments on the lady in question; but when the marriage was agreed on, he determined to make them all a sacrifice on the altar of Hymen. I happened to call on him when he was employed on this expiatory oblation, and he read to me every sheet before he threw it into the fire, expressing at once his admiration of the force of the writing, notwithstanding its peculiarity, and his astonishment at the unmerited severity of the strictures.

Mr. Este and Mr. Kemble at length became so intimate, that the latter was induced to embark in a public paper instituted by Mr. Este; and as the paper did not succeed, Mr. Kemble lost about three hundred pounds in the adventure. Mr. Este, who doubtless lost as much, afterwards, in conjunction with the late Captain Topham, brought forth a new paper entitled "The World," which on account of the whimsical style of the writing, and the high tone of superiority which it affected, characterizing the other daily papers as the "low prints," for some time at-

tracted attention, and seemed to promise eventual success ; but as Topham was an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Este, and uniformly endeavoured to imitate his mode of writing, “ The World ” had all its columns filled by the same strange phraseology, and the public in general looked upon it as a fantastic jargon that was principally ridiculous, and generally unintelligible. “ The World,” therefore, gradually declined, and at length was wholly relinquished.

If the style of Mr. Este, with its point, humour, and oddity, had only formed a portion of “ The World,” and the rest of the paper had been characterised by plain language, matters of fact, early intelligence, humorous effusions, and solid reasoning, it is not improbable that it would have been successful, particularly as there was an imposing influence in its affected contempt of the other daily journals ; for I believe it may be observed, that contempt, whether merited or not, generally lowers its object.

On the extinction of “ The World,” Mr. Este demanded of Topham an annuity of 200*l.* as an equivalent for the terms on which at first he engaged to contribute his literary efforts in support of the paper. Topham demurred, alleging that those terms depended on its duration. Without resorting to law to support his claims, Mr. Este opened a literary battery against Topham in a paper, since defunct, entitled “ The Oracle.” Thus money, the great disorganizer of the most intimate connexions, divided these friends, who seemed to be devoted to each other. Este persevered in his attacks, to which he annexed his name ; and Topham, unable to oppose the talents which he so highly revered, agreed to

grant the annuity, which Este secured by an insurance on the life of his quondam friend and admiring coadjutor.

Such, I have been assured, was the state of the case between the parties, who, of course, never were united again. Topham then went to his estate in the country, and devoted himself to rural sports and retirement. He was gentlemanly in his manners and courteous in his disposition, but egregiously vain, and anxious for notoriety, even to the most ridiculous extravagance in his dress, which rendered him not only the object of notice, but of laughter and derision. As a proof of his morbid love of notoriety, after he had retired for some years, an allusion to his short coat, and exposed limbs, appeared in one of the public journals. One of his friends, who knew his disposition, cut the article from the paper, and sent it to him in his retreat. What would most probably have offended any other man, was very gratifying to Topham, who wrote to his friend in consequence, expressing his wonder that he was not totally forgotten in London, thanking his friend for the communication, and sending him a present of game in return for his kindness.

It has been mentioned that Mr. Este, in his communications with Mr. Henry Woodfall, was as mysterious as Junius; and though it is probable that Mr. Woodfall guessed who was his correspondent, it is not certain that he positively ever knew him. The pecuniary recompense which Mr. Este was to receive was to be conveyed to a coffee-house, or some stated place, in the same manner as Mr. Woodfall's private correspondence was to be conveyed to Junius. At length an attack appeared from the pen of the

anonymous writer, importing that a certain nobleman had ruined himself by gaming. The nobleman alluded to was the late Lord Loughborough, but whether his lordship's name was mentioned in the offensive paragraph I do not remember. His lordship commenced an action against the printer, who was cast and fined an hundred pounds, which the noble lord would not accept, but desired Mr. Woodfall to assign to some public charity. There was then a suspension of the intercourse between the anonymous correspondent and Mr. Woodfall. But after the lapse of some months, perhaps longer, the writer addressed Mr. Woodfall, desiring to know if he was disposed to receive his communications again, and requesting that he would signify his intentions, by a simple *No* or *Yes* in his next paper. Mr. Woodfall, smarting under the consequences of the prosecution, answered "No" in the largest letters that his printing press contained. This circumstance, which should have been mentioned in the due course of the narration, probably induced Mr. Este, having tried the force of his talents in the field of public literature, to direct his attention to the establishment of a public journal under his own control.

In justice to the memory of Mr. Este, it should be observed, that he did not invent the charge against the nobleman in question, as it was generally reported at the time, and believed in spite of the legal decision.

Mr. Este was also suspected of having introduced, in the paper called "The World," some defamatory articles on the memory of Lord Cowper, which was the subject of another prosecution. It was thought strange that reflections on the memory of the dead

should be the subject of legal punishment, but it was contended that defamation of the dead tended to excite disturbance among their living relations. However, by the advice and assistance of my friend Mr. Const, the counsel, now chairman of the Middlesex Sessions, this difficulty was also surmounted; but the fear of such future dangers intimidated both Topham and Este, and not only weakened their exertions for the paper, but inclined them to dispose of it, or to give it a death-blow, which it finally received, and was extinguished without regret, except to the parties who were concerned in it.

Topham was intimately connected with Peter Andrews, a gentleman who had acquired a large fortune by his contracts with government for gunpowder. He became a member of parliament, and had some reputation for literary talents. He wrote many poetical trifles for "The World" newspaper, and the whole of the poetical contributions for that paper were published in two volumes. The intimacy between Topham and Andrews was so great, that they were generally invited together in most companies; and it was reported that they met every morning to form plans for distinguishing themselves, by witty dialogues and mutual *bons mots* in the evening. But as they were both in some degree deaf, they must have been liable to fall into miscarriages that would have betrayed their preconcerted impromptus. It is therefore hardly probable that they had engaged in so hazardous an adventure.

I was a member of a weekly club entitled "Keep the Line," though perhaps no club could more trespass upon the line of decorum, which its name implied, with respect to the liberties that the members

took in rallying each other. Andrews was a member of this club, and being of an irritable disposition, was ill qualified to bear the satirical and sportive sallies of his associates. It was well said of him by Mr. Merry the poet, that "Andrews considered illness less as a misfortune than as an insult." He was the author of several epilogues purposely calculated for the talents of the late admirable comic actor Mr. Lewis, and the late Mrs. Mattocks. These compositions were not destitute of humour and point, but were chiefly ludicrous exaggerations of the lowest of city manners among inferior tradespeople, and would have had little effect if not delivered by those excellent performers.

Andrews wrote a play, but the drama was far beyond the reach of his powers. He first excited public attention by having seduced Miss Brown from the stage, when she was rising rapidly into fame by the beauty of her person and her musical and theatrical talents. But the subsequent conduct of this lady strongly indicated that he had little reason to pride himself on the triumph of his gallantry, as it is by no means improbable that any other assailant, with an equal opportunity, would have been equally successful.

The fate of this captivating syren was pitiable. She went to India, and returned to this country with the captain of the Nancy packet, to whom she was attached, and the vessel, with the whole of the ship's company, was lost among the rocks of Scilly.

Andrews very early in life began to assume the man of fashion. His father was a dry-salter, or of some similar business, in Watling Street; and the son, after assisting his father in the business of the

day, used to sally forth in the evening with sword and bag to Ranelagh, or some other public place. He gradually formed higher connexions, and engaging in profitable speculations, soon became intimate with the profligate Lord Lyttelton. They were both superstitious and fond of relating stories of ghosts, of which Andrews had a great collection, and, being a nervous man, he seemed to place implicit confidence in the most extravagant fictions. Lyttelton possessed superior talents, but appeared to be equally credulous.

Andrews had, as I have observed, a knack of writing epilogues chiefly suited to the taste of the galleries of a theatre, or the vulgar part of an audience wherever seated. When he had finished a composition of this kind, and received the approbation of the author of the play for which it was intended, he generally asked the latter why he had not written the epilogue himself; and when the dramatist declared his want of such ability, Andrews would gradually work himself into anger, as a lion lashes itself into fury, because the task had been thrown upon him. He was however hospitable, kind, and good-humoured when nothing interfered with the peculiarities of his disposition.

To return to Mr. Este. He published in the year 1795 "An Account of his Journey in the year 1793, through Flanders, Brabant, Germany, and Switzerland." It is an amusing and instructive work, and shows great acuteness and observation, as well as industry. It is at times affected in style, but less erratic than that which characterised his contributions to the public press. The journey was undertaken for the laudable purpose of finding the

best medical school for his son, by whom he was accompanied. The latter gentleman is a surgeon of eminence in this metropolis, and highly esteemed for his personal merits.

Mr. Este in this work states that as Pavia was recommended to him as a good medical school, he was willing to proceed to that place; but with his usual peculiarity of style he observes, that he "could not but be scared by the powers of distance and of doubt." This is a strange acknowledgment of the fear of travelling, as he afterwards ventured twice to the West Indies, in order to settle the concerns of the gentleman who married his daughter, one of the most beautiful and amiable women in the estimation of those who had the pleasure of knowing her. This lady died in the prime of youth and beauty.

Mr. Este, as I have observed, was an acute and sound critic on acting, and much attached to the last race of performers, particularly Garrick and Henderson. His opinions were emphatic and abrupt. When the late George Cooke was a popular favourite, I asked Mr. Este if he liked him. He answered energetically, "God forbid." And when I asked him his opinion of Mr. Kean, during the zenith of his fame, his answer was, "He has not an element," not appearing to consider the spirit that frequently marks the acting of that performer as of "the right savour."

The last time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Este was at the house of our mutual friend Sir William Beechey, where he was all animation, and exerted himself so much to entertain us, that, as Sir William told me, he felt languid and indis-

posed on the following day, and added that I had killed him by my admiration and encouragement of his humorous sallies.

Mr. Este was one of the readers of the royal chapel at Whitehall, and in my opinion he delivered the sacred service with most impressive solemnity, though some considered his manner as rather too theatrical. This notion, however, probably arose from his known attachment to dramatic amusements and his connexion with theatrical performers. Mr. Este told me that he remembered Mrs. Pritchard, and, though an excellent comic actress, she was inferior to Mrs. Siddons in the higher province of tragedy.

Such, in my humble estimation, is an impartial character of Mr. Este. He possessed an acute, discerning, and decided mind, and if he had been trained to politics rather than to the church, would have been an able servant of government. He would have had sagacity enough to discover all public abuses, and firmness enough to prevent their continuance, as far as his power could extend. His form was of the middle size and stature. His face was plain, but expressive; and I heard Mrs. Siddons, no mean judge of character and manners, once say, that the ease, courtesy, and spirit of his conversation amply compensated for any want of beauty in his features. He was firmly attached to the British constitution, but the revolutionary principles of France, during the period of their ascendancy, seemed to have rendered him a more zealous advocate for liberty than he had been before that lamentable event; yet, on the late king's recovery nothing could manifest more fervid, ardent, and devoted loyalty, than

his writings exhibited in the earlier pages of "The World."

As a proof, however, that he was considered a friend to revolutionary principles, the late Colonel Bosville, who kept an open table for revolutionary characters, bequeathed 2000*l.* to Mr. Este. Colonel Bosville at first kept an open and expensive table at the Piazza Coffee-house, and afterwards at his own mansion. His guests went without invitation, and it was usual among them, when they intended to dine at the Piazza, or at the colonel's house, to tell each other that they dined "at home." The colonel must have been very rich, as well as very revolutionary, to support so hospitable an establishment. He bequeathed, I believe, the same sum to the late Major James, who was one of the officers of the waggon-train, and was a favourite agent of the late Marquis of Hastings.

Major James, whom I knew in very early life, was generally styled Jacobin James, from his supposed attachment to those political principles which made him a favourite with Colonel Bosville. It is said that he had advanced 8000*l.* in the service of the Marquis of Hastings, which his widow, with a large family, was not able to obtain, not for want of justice in the Marquis, but on account of the impoverished state of his affairs.

Major James was the author or compiler of a military dictionary in two volumes, a valuable work, of which he also published an abridgement. The major was attached to poetry as well as to politics, and published two volumes of the former, with a portrait of himself, and plates illustrative of passages in his works. He was perpetually writing impromptus,

and like Master Matthew, in Ben Jonson's play, repeated them in the street to every acquaintance whom he met. After the first salutation he was sure to say a lady asked him to write on such a subject, or that some lines occurred to him on such an occasion. I knew him for upwards of thirty years, and never once met him without being favoured with a recital of one or two of his extemporary effusions. He was a friendly, good-humoured man, and if he had devoted his pen to military subjects only, would doubtless have suggested many hints for the improvement of the service. He was understood to be a good Latin and French scholar, and to have conducted himself through life with integrity and a kind disposition. He was very intimate with Mr. Combe, whom I have mentioned in another place, and purchased at a large price, a fine portrait of that gentleman which was painted by Mr. Northcote.

James was once attacked by a gentleman whom I knew under the name of Count Stuarton, a Frenchman, and devoted to the Bourbon family. Stuarton wrote a publication entitled "The Revolutionary Plutarch," in which he gave a severe account of the family of Buonaparte, and of most of the persons who had distinguished themselves in effecting the French revolution, and by assisting in the elevation of the Corsican Emperor. These works were by no means relied on as authentic memorials, though they had an extensive sale.

What imputations he cast upon Major James I cannot now remember, but they were of so strong a description, that James thought it necessary to bring an action against the author for the vindication of

his character, as he was in the military service of his Majesty. Fearing the issue of the trial, the count left this country, and it is said went to America. He was a very intelligent and agreeable man, and so elegant in his manners, as to justify the supposition that he was really a foreign nobleman.

James left a widow with several children, but on account of the failure of his claim on the Marquis of Hastings, in very indifferent circumstances. He often expressed a wish to introduce me to his wife and family, but never did, and I have heard that she married again. Mr. Chambers, the late banker in Bond Street, before his own misfortunes overwhelmed him, advocated her claim on the marquis with great zeal, but without effect.

No man in London had a more extensive acquaintance than James, who was an agreeable companion, and was so much invited abroad that he must have enjoyed but little domestic intercourse with his family. As an epigrammatist he sometimes hit upon a lucky point, but his poems have no originality, pathos, or force, and have barely the merit of smooth versification.

Mr. Este, it appears, had been into the city to see his friend Mr. Sharpe, a gentleman well known in the literary and political circles, and who, I believe, is the only surviving member of Dr. Johnson's last club. He has generally been known by the designation of "Conversation Sharpe," from the justness of his observations, and the abundance of his anecdotes. He was also a member of the "Keep-the-line Club," which I have already mentioned. Mr. Este returned home somewhat indisposed, but declined any refreshing nourishment. He was soon

affected by a violent fever, which terminated in his death, to the regret of all who understood his real character, and could appreciate his talents and acquisitions.

Mr. Combe, who was himself powerful in conversation, told me that he enjoyed no conversation more than that of Mr. Este, whose whimsical and humorous flights manifested a pregnant and luxuriant imagination, as well as varied and extensive knowledge. The late Mr. John Kemble was also a great admirer of the original powers and conversational talents of Mr. Este, particularly as he was an able critic on theatrical performances, and could give Mr. Kemble a faithful and vivid description of those actors who had been distinguished before Mr. Kemble was a candidate for theatrical honours.

I had the good fortune to see Mr. Barry perform in the decline of his life ; but I admired his venerable remains, and was surprised, when I once asked Mr. Este's opinion of that actor, to hear him say that he was " a poor creature." The reason of this opinion, I conceive, was that Mr. Este, who looked for intellect rather than for sensibility, found the latter chiefly in Barry, and both in unrivalled union in Garrick. It should be remembered, however, that Barry was famous in *Othello*, which Garrick relinquished ; and that he maintained so successful a contention with Garrick in *Romeo*, that the public judgment seemed to be undecided as to the superiority of their respective performances.

The REV. JOHN WARNER, D.D. A person more generally known than this gentleman by various ranks, has never fallen within my notice. From the gaiety of his disposition, and, perhaps, from the

freedom of his conduct, he was commonly styled Jack Warner. He was the son of Ferdinando Warner, well known at the time for a publication on the gout. The subject of my present attention was a very popular preacher at Tavistock Chapel, in Broad Court, Drury Lane. He was afterwards chaplain to Lord Gower, now Marquess of Stafford, when Ambassador to France, just before the first Revolution broke out in that country. His lordship, struck with horror at the dreadful excesses of the people, and finding that there was an end of all legitimate government in that country, took an early opportunity of returning to England. Dr. Warner was favourable to the principles on which the French revolution was founded, but abhorred the sanguinary manner in which they were carried into effect.

No man knew the world better than Dr. Warner, and few equalled him in companionable gaiety. And here I can give a striking proof of that ascendancy which Mr. David Williams acquired over his argumentative opponents in company, by the negligent manner in which he passed over their opinions, and avoided giving them a direct answer.

I dined with Mr. Merry, the poet, when Mr. David Williams, Dr. Warner, and, as far as I recollect, Sir James Mackintosh, were of the party. The doctor spoke warmly in favour of the revolutionary principles of the French demagogues, chiefly directing his discourse to David Williams, who listened with a sort of affable contempt, which absolutely cowed the doctor, who soon retired, though he was remarkable for the spirit, humour, and knowledge by which he at all times appeared to lead the con-

versation. When he had retired, David Williams, with the same sort of contemptuous negligence, said, "That's an odd little man," though the doctor was nearly as large as himself, and on any other occasion would have been more than a match for him in colloquial powers.

I once asked the doctor what was his manner of preaching by which he had acquired so much popularity. "Why," said he, "I used to take two oratorical boxes with me into the pulpit, one filled with the virtues, and the other with the vices, and avoided all dry doctrines. When I endeavoured to allure the audience to goodness, I took a virtue out of my box, and exhibited it in the most glowing colours. When I attempted to deter them from evil courses, I took a vice out of the other box, and represented its odious deformities with the most terrific energy, by which means I kept my congregation awake, which probably would not have been the case if I had entered into formal reasoning and theological discussion.

Ludicrous as this description of himself as a preacher was, it illustrates his manner, and accounts for his eminence among the general order of people. He once accompanied the late facetious George Selwin on a mission to Florence, as I understood, to the mother of the late Earl of Carlisle, a lady of a very whimsical character; and the letters which he wrote describing the events of his journey were highly diverting, but were somewhat too free in their nature. They were addressed to the late Mr. Penneck, with whom I dined tête-à-tête. After dinner he read them to me, and successively committed them to the flames.

Dr. Warner was a good-looking man, but rather negligent in his person, and used to walk in the streets without gloves. I have mentioned him in the article respecting Mr. Charles Townley, as one of the party who deliberated on the conscience of a Roman Catholic Priest, and sanctioned his acceptance of a Protestant benefice in the gift of that gentleman. I never heard when or where Dr. Warner died, and this obscure decease is extraordinary, considering that he was so generally known to various classes of society, and so courted for his companionable qualities. He was considered as a good Greek, Latin, and French scholar.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOHN NICHOLLS, ESQ. Above thirty years have passed since I was first introduced to this gentleman at the apartments of my old friend, the Rev. Richard Penneck, and very many years elapsed before I had the pleasure of being again known to him. When I was first introduced to him, I was struck by the softness of his voice, the suavity of his manners, and the extent, variety, and profundity of his knowledge, so far as I could presume to judge on so casual and brief an interview; and I confess I was much surprised at the warmth with which he expressed his sentiments when he became a Member of the House of Commons. But when I read his work, entitled "Recollections and Re-

flections on Public Affairs during the reign of his late Majesty George the Third," my surprise gave way to my conviction of his genuine public spirit and attachment to the British Constitution, which he seemed anxious to see retained in its full purity. His work appears to me to be one of the soundest political productions that have appeared in my time.

I have before said, that I do not pretend to be much of a politician; but my reading has been extensive, and I have had the pleasure of conversing with several of the most enlightened characters of my time. Considering the work of Mr. Nicholls as what ought to be the *vade mecum* of every lover of his country, I shall take the liberty of referring to some passages in it, though I may be accused of presumption in venturing to form an estimate of so masterly a composition, and sometimes to differ in opinion with the learned, sagacious, and patriotic author.

Mr. Nicholls has traced with great judgment the principal and secondary causes of the French Revolution, and considers as one of the chief of them the distinction between the Noblesse and the Bourgeoisie: and when we reflect on the profligacy, extravagance, and arrogance of the former, it is rather a matter of wonder that the latter should have submitted to them so long. It is to be hoped, for their own sakes, that the noblesse in all countries will take warning from the fatal history of the French Revolution.

Mr. Nicholls does not approve of Triennial Parliaments, and gives good reasons. Mr. Burke was no favourite with Mr. Nicholls, who, of course,

entertained a high opinion of his abilities and knowledge, but not of his principles; and from what I saw and heard of Mr. Burke, I entirely concur with Mr. Nicholls. Mr. Burke was violent and vulgar.

Mr. Nicholls says, that "On one occasion he spoke of the Earl of Shelburne in terms so coarse and unmeasured, as to preclude all possibility of reconciliation." This was exactly the style of a vulgar upstart, which character he fully manifested in his treatment of Mr. Hastings in the House of Lords, as I have mentioned in another place.

Mr. Nicholls had previously mentioned the "violence and arrogance" of Burke even to his great patron, Lord Rockingham. I presume to differ with him, however, respecting the character of Lord Thurlow, of whom he says, that "trimming was not congenial to his character." But to my certain knowledge, during the King's (George the Third) illness in 1788-9, though he appeared to be acting with Government during that melancholy period, he used secretly to visit Carlton House, where he several times met Mr. Sheridan; and as soon as he found that the King was recovering, he made that memorable speech in the House of Lords, emphatically exclaiming, that when he forgot his Sovereign, he hoped his God might forget him.

Lord Thurlow was certainly in the "heart of the mystery" of the Opposition party, which he deserted without the least ceremony when there appeared gratifying signs of his Majesty's restoration. As a strong presumption also that Lord Thurlow secretly consulted with Mr. Sheridan during his Majesty's illness, and when there was little hope of his recovery, Mr. Sheridan had drawn up the out-

lines of a prospectus, submitted, no doubt, to his Lordship, for changing the politics of "The Morning Post," then the chief Ministerial paper, which had been recently purchased by the party. I had the sketch of this Prospectus in Mr. Sheridan's own hand-writing, which may still be among my papers.

When the Opposition leaders, at a private meeting on the subject of the first Regency Bill, expressed an apprehension that they should find a powerful adversary in Lord Thurlow, Charles Fox observed, that they had often opposed him with success in the House of Commons, and he saw no reason why he should conquer them in the Lords; adding, from the old ballad:

"I trust there is within this land
Five hundred men as good as he."

I presume also to differ with Mr. Nicholls in his not very favourable opinion of Mr. Pitt, whom he blames for having been overborne against his better judgment to engage in a war against French principles. Mr. Pitt was too disinterested in his character to be influenced by a love of place, except from a desire to serve his country; and the firmness of his mind was not likely to agree to any measure except upon conviction. Why may it not be supposed that Mr. Pitt was alarmed at those revolutionary principles which overthrew the Government of France, and threatened the destruction of every throne in Europe? Mr. Pitt, to use his own expression, acted according to "existing circumstances,"—an accordance that might be true policy: for who can pretend to foretell the consequences of any measure? And Mr. Pitt might

think, that to join in an opposition to French principles abroad, was one of the best means to secure the government of this country. Besides, at that period, there were revolutionary spirits at home, who, if they could have destroyed the throne, would probably have proceeded to all the bloody horrors of the French Revolution.

I venture also to differ with Mr. Nicholls in his estimate of the character of his late Majesty George the Third. That monarch was of a peaceable and quiet disposition, highly amiable in private life, benevolent, and a friend to the arts. His reign was too much disturbed by the intrigues and violence of party: and who can say, that to preserve national tranquillity, he did not at times yield to the counsels of his Ministers, contrary to his better judgment? His Majesty was a zealous friend to literature, and to those arts which embellish and dignify the country, and are honourable to the powers of the human mind.

Before I take leave of Mr. Nicholls's valuable work, I ought to apologize for venturing at all to offer my humble remarks on what appears to me to be the result of deep and extensive historical knowledge, political sagacity, enlarged views, and sincere devotion to the genuine principles of the Constitution, and which, while it supports the rights and dignity of the throne, equally tends to protect and secure the privileges and safety of the people.

Mr. Nicholls, in his work, speaks favourably of Sir Robert Walpole; and in a private conversation, in which I had the pleasure of hearing his opinions more at large as to the character of Sir Robert, he said, that it was his chief and constant object to secure the House of Brunswick on the throne, and

to preclude all possibility of the return of the Stuarts. Mr. Nicholls took no notice of the enormous system of bribery by which he was accused of supporting his Administration ; conceiving, I suppose, that Sir Robert, at that critical period, when there was a strong spirit of Jacobitism prevalent in a great body of friends to the Stuart line, thought, as selfishness is the great principle of human action, bribery was likely to be the most powerful antidote to the political poison, and consequently the best means to remove all danger from the Brunswick family.

Here I may introduce an anecdote which I learned from my friend Dr. Monsey, who knew the fact. A public dinner was held at a tavern in Yarmouth during the reign of George the First. The company almost entirely consisted of friends to the Stuart family. The King's health, without specifying the name of George, was drunk in so mysterious a manner, as to alarm a sturdy old farmer, who was strongly attached to the new family on the throne : therefore, when it came to his turn to pass the toast, he said :—"Gentlemen, the present toast has been given in so enigmatical a way, that I do not understand it ; therefore, to put an end to all doubts and mysteries, here's King George." When the next man in succession was to drink the toast, he said :—"Well, then, here's the King that God loves best." "Hold ! hold !" said the loyal farmer, interrupting him ; "that's not King George !" A triumphant laugh of the Jacobite party followed, of course, and this simple mistake covered the loyal farmer with confusion.

My father was a member of an evening club, held at a tavern in Cross-street, Hatton-garden, which

was frequented by the chief inhabitants of that neighbourhood, among whom was Dr. Crawford, who kept a respectable academy in that street. Mr. Munden, the actor, and myself, were among his scholars. I do not recollect Mr. Munden, but I believe he recollected me ; and as he was a respectable member of society, as well as an excellent actor, I was glad to renew our intercourse when he became one of the chief comic props of the London stage.

At the club above mentioned, a Mr. Matthews, an eminent dancing-master, was among the members. What Churchill says of Davies the actor, might, according to report, be said of the dancing-master :

That Matthews had a very pretty wife.

Matthews had become acquainted with a Mr. Sterne, a German, and a scholar. He was an usher for the foreign department of Dr. Crawford's academy. As he was but in indifferent circumstances, Matthews invited him to reside in his house, in Brook-street, Holborn. The beauty of Mrs. Matthews unhappily captivated the sensitive German, insomuch that the friends of Matthews expressed their surprise that so young and good-looking a man of talents should be received as a resident in his house. Matthews became alarmed, and by some alteration in his conduct towards Sterne, excited strong suspicions in the latter. It unfortunately happened, that one of the children of Matthews, unable to eat the whole of a piece of bread and butter, had left the remainder on the table in the room assigned to Sterne, who considered it as a studied insult to his poverty on the part of Matthews, and determined on revenge, not merely on Matthews, but on those whom he suspected

of having excited his jealousy, and consequently of having obliged him to quit the house. He, therefore, with a concealed brace of pistols, went to the club as usual; and soon after Matthews appeared, he drew forth his pistols, with one shot Matthews dead, and with the other attempted to destroy himself, but was prevented. He was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty, and sentenced to death. Dr. Crawford, and I believe other friends of Sterne, endeavoured to save his life on the plea of insanity; but in vain.

My father, from motives of humanity, visited him in Newgate, and Sterne told him, that as he had suspected him to be one of the chief advisers of Matthews, and to have excited his jealousy, he had determined to wreak his vengeance on him. He added, that he went for that purpose to Dobney's Bowling-green, then a popular place, at a part of Islington now called Pentonville, which I well remember; that he was going to shoot my father, but that some person accidentally joined in conversation with him, and he was afraid of destroying an innocent man.

Sterne did not deny his attachment to Mrs. Matthews, and lamented his unhappy passion, but declared that he had no dishonourable intention. He took my father by the hand, expressed his regret at his suspicions, which my father assured him were wholly unfounded, as he had not officiously interfered on the occasion. Sterne then submitted to his fate with firmness. What became of Mrs. Matthews I never heard; but it is probable that, recommended by beauty and misfortune, she did not want friends.

I hope I shall not be accused of levity, when, to relieve the impression of this melancholy story, I mention, that Mr. Foot, (an apothecary in Hatton-garden, and the uncle of my late friend Jesse Foot, the eminent surgeon, who was one of the members of the club,) on one night when the subject was Dutch affairs, suddenly exclaimed: "Let me see, who is now the King of Holland?" A general laugh prevailed in the room, and poor Foot was never afterwards mentioned, except by the title of the King of Holland.

Dr. Monsey told me that he was once in company with another physician and an eminent farrier. The physician stated, that among the difficulties of his profession was that of discovering the maladies of children, as they could not explain the symptoms of their disorders. "Well," said the farrier, "your difficulties are not greater than mine, for my patients, the horses, are equally unable to explain their complaints." "Ah!" rejoined the physician, "my brother doctor must conquer me, as he has brought his cavalry against my infantry."

The late WILLIAM CLAY, ESQ. I became acquainted with this gentleman, an eminent and wealthy merchant, at the hospitable table of my old and esteemed friend Francis Const, Esq. where I heard him relate the following story, which he vouched as a fact within his own knowledge.

A gentleman was one morning passing through Fenchurch-street, where he saw a young man in livery, with a pitcher in his hand, going for water to a neighbouring pump. The likeness of this young man to a departed friend, induced him to stop him and ask his name. The name being the same as

that of his deceased friend, confirmed him in the suspicion that the young man was the son of that friend. He knew of the existence of the young man, but knew not what had become of him. Upon inquiry, the young man told him he was servant to Mr. —, an eminent wholesale tradesman in that street, who was very kind to him, had encouraged his addresses to the cook-maid, and, on their marriage, had promised to establish them in a public-house. It appeared that this tradesman was executor to the father of this young man, and therefore the gentleman who had thus accidentally met him desired that he would obtain leave of his master to be absent for half an hour next day, and then meet the gentleman at the same place. In the meantime, the gentleman who took so kind an interest in the son investigated the property which his father had left, and found that to the extent of 40,000*l.* it had been bequeathed to the son, whom the executor had kept in servitude, suppressing the will; and by promoting his marriage and settling him in an humble condition, with which he would be probably contented, not knowing his rights, hoped to keep him in obscurity and himself possess the inheritance. Mr. Clay told me the name of the perfidious executor, who, on being applied to with a proper legal authority, was thunder-struck, and made no opposition to the claims of the young man; and never after could encounter the gaze of those who visited him on business, but constantly bent his eyes upon his account-book, and in that manner conversed with them.

I had forgotten this extraordinary story; and therefore, on meeting Mr. Clay at Mr. Const's, de-

sired him to repeat it. No doubt villainous designs of the same kind as that which was so happily frustrated on this occasion, have too often been successful; but as this fact was so well ascertained, it was proper to introduce it, as it may operate as a warning to those who have property to leave, to be cautious in the choice of their executors.

I may here properly introduce another singular event which Divines may reasonably assign to an interposition of Providence. I derived it from a lady who knew the gentleman, and on whose veracity I can rely. A gentleman, now dead, who was connected with Kensington Palace, had dined in Piccadilly, near to Hyde Park, and on going home late at night, thought that he might safely proceed through Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. When he approached the bridge in Hyde Park, two men, who were leaning over each side of the bridge, left their station, joined each other on the middle of the road, and approached towards him. It was at the time when, within my remembrance, it was the fashion with gentlemen to wear swords in the street. He drew his sword, and desired that they would open a passage for him. They, however, continued to advance, and as he did not know how they might be armed, he thought proper to retreat, and being acquainted with a gentleman who lived at Knightsbridge, he directed his course thither, and climbed to the top of his friend's wall, intending to apprise the family. When he attempted to descend into the yard, a ferocious dog barked so violently, that he kept his post some time, and then returned into the Park, intending to pursue his way, thinking that the men had left the place; but they remained on

the spot, and advanced towards him as before. He retired, crossed the Park, and entered the gardens at the north-east door. As soon as he passed the pond, he heard a splash as if somebody had thrown himself into the water. For a moment he suspected that this might be a trick of some confederate of the men, but a sudden glimpse of the moon displayed a woman struggling with the water. He hastened immediately to the place, plunged into the water, brought her safely to the bank, and inquired the cause of her desperate design. She told him she was pregnant by a gentleman who suspected that he was not the cause, and had abandoned the connexion; that her unfortunate condition was obvious, and that her father had discarded her; therefore, hopeless of recovering her seducer and her parent, she had resolved to get rid of her misery by suicide. On further inquiry, the gentleman found that he was acquainted with her seducer and her parent. To the former he disclosed this desperate proof of the probable truth of her charge, and, as her character was otherwise amiable, he married her. She was reconciled to her family, and conducted herself as a wife and mother with fidelity and affection.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE REV. WILLIAM JACKSON. It may be thought strange that, considering the unfortunate end of this gentleman, I should introduce him in the present work; but as he was one of my earliest friends, and as I derived much advantage from his conversation and counsel, during the intercourse of many years, I cannot but remember him with pleasure as well as regret. I became acquainted with him at the house of Mrs. Mills, formerly a public singer at Vauxhall, and afterwards a musical actress at Drury-Lane Theatre, during the management of Mr. Garrick. Her maiden name was Burchill, under which name she originally sang at Vauxhall Gardens, and, I believe, was apprenticed to old Mr. Tyers, the first proprietor of that place of amusement. She was in the capacity of a milk-girl in the neighbourhood of Mr. Tyers' country seat, and used to sing while she carried on her pastoral employment. Mr. Tyers was struck with the sweetness, power, and extent of her voice, and inquiring into her condition, obtained the consent of her parents to bind her to his service. She, therefore, for some years lived with his family, and received musical instruction at his expense. She was not disposed to study, and therefore made very little progress in musical science, depending wholly on her ear and her memory.

During her apprenticeship she married the younger Vincent, a performer on the oboe, an instrument on which his father obtained celebrity, and one of the band in the Vauxhall orchestra. When her articles expired, she was engaged at Drury-Lane Theatre; and Churchill, one of the least lenient of poetical critics, speaks of her in his "Rosciad" in the following terms :

"Lo! Vincent comes—with simple grace array'd;
She laughs at paltry arts, and scorns parade.
Nature, through her, is by reflection shown,
Whilst Gay once more knows Polly for his own.
Talk not to me of diffidence and fear,
I see it all, but must forgive it here;
Defects like these which modest terrors cause,
From impudence itself extort applause;
Candour and reason still take Virtue's part;
We love e'en foibles with so good a heart."

Here Churchill was probably induced to give so favourable a report of her abilities by his personal knowledge of her amiable disposition; for I was on intimate terms with her in my early days, and can vouch for the justness of the poet's testimony in favour of her disposition, though he was certainly too partial to her talents. With little education, she had an excellent understanding, and with the advantage of good culture, would have been an excellent epistolary writer.

On the death of Mr. Vincent, a few years after she quitted the stage, and was married to Mr. Mills, a gentleman who was Captain of one of the ships that coast to different British settlements in India, and subsequently occupied a public station at Calcutta. This gentleman was the last survivor of

those who were unfortunately confined in what was styled the Black Hole at Calcutta. He is mentioned by Mr. Orme in his account of our Military Operations in India with great honour, for his kindness to Governor Holwell on that melancholy occasion.

Mr. Mills related the mournful event to me himself. He told me that he stood near to the window in that dreadful situation, and that Governor Holwell stood immediately behind him. The Governor, nearly exhausted by pressure and the want of air, in a languid tone said, that unless he could get nearer to the window, he should soon be dead. Mr. Mills told me that he felt himself so strong, that, reflecting on the importance of the Governor's life compared with his own, he with great difficulty made way for the Governor, and took the place which he had left. The consequence was that the Governor revived, but Mr. Mills was soon exhausted, and on the opening of the door, was removed as apparently dead, among those who fell victims on the spot.

Governor Holwell, in his account, as far as I remember, does not render the same justice to Mr. Mills as the latter received from the statement of Mr. Orme.

I was so attached to Mrs. Mills's daughter, that if our means would have justified us, we should have been married. The mother tolerated our courtship under a persuasion, too common, that prosperous events might possibly occur. I had, however, a lucky escape, as she proved a very frail character. She married the son of Mr. Ferguson, who formerly gave Lectures on Astronomy, and other branches of science, in this metropolis. The son was a surgeon

in the service of the Hon. East India Company. His grave disposition ill-suited with the volatile character of his wife, and she soon parted with him, placing herself under another protector, whom she quitted in turn, according to Rowe's description :

“ One lover to another still succeeds,
Another and another after that,
And the last fool was welcome as the former.”

However, as her personal charms were much upon the wane, during her residence with her last protector, an old foreigner, she ended her life with him. He was rich, and as he was anxious to qualify her as a public singer, he employed many musical instructors at a considerable expense, but to no purpose, as her voice, though powerful, was not well-toned, and she did not possess a correct ear. My old friend, the late Dr. Arnold, told me that having been professionally consulted, he honestly advised the old gentleman to desist from the attempt, as her voice was *acid*, her ear incorrect, and she did not possess requisite talents. The old gentleman, however, was too dotingly fond to listen to the doctor's disinterested and friendly counsel, and other professors were employed, but without success ; and at last she relinquished the vain attempt.

My friendship for the mother, and my recollection of my early attachment to herself, induced me to take an interest in her success. I went to hear her sing at the Pantheon, when the concerts at that place were under the direction of my old friend, Dr. Burney. I was not able to be in time for the first act of the concert, and therefore asked the doctor how Mrs. Ferguson came off? “What, did you not

hear her in the first act?" said the doctor. On my answering in the negative, "Well," said he, with the caution that usually accompanies a long knowledge of the world, "she sings in the second act, and then you can judge for yourself." I found, on hearing her, that Dr. Arnold's opinion, as I might of course have expected, was well founded, and was confirmed, by implication, by the wary reserve of Dr. Burney.

Mrs. Mills retained her friendship for me during her life. I ought to have before mentioned that, observing the levity of her daughter, in pure friendship she advised me to break off the connexion. I attended the funeral of Mrs. Mills by desire of her husband, who survived her many years; and at his request also, wrote the epitaph which is inscribed on her tomb-stone in the church-yard of St. Pancras. But I have wandered too long from the account of my unfortunate friend Mr. Jackson.

He was a native of Ireland, and was entered at the University of Oxford, where he resided many years, and was afterwards ordained and acted as curate at St. Mary-le-Strand, but never obtained a benefice. I never heard him preach, but have been told that his matter was solid, and his manner dignified and solemn. When I first knew him, he was married to a widow. She was older than her husband, of a romantic turn, and much inclined to read novels. She was very fond of music, and performed sufficiently to amuse herself on the pianoforte.

When I first became acquainted with Mr. Jackson, he was editor of a daily paper, entitled the "Public Ledger," which, amidst the novelties and fluctuations of the diurnal press, is the only one that

still maintains its ground, its only competitors at that period being the "Public Advertiser," "The Gazetteer," and the "Daily Advertiser," all of which have sunk into oblivion. The "Public Ledger," at the time that Mr. Jackson conducted it, had an action brought against it by the celebrated Samuel Foote, for a libel on his character on a charge too well known to need mentioning in this place. Mr. Foote, whose morals were of the loosest description, and whose extravagant mode of living obliged him to raise supplies as well as he could, addressed a letter to the celebrated Duchess of Kingston, intimating to the lady that he had written a drama, in which she was the heroine, but that it was in her power to prevent its introduction on the stage. The Duchess, indignant at this application, the meaning of which was obvious, sent an angry and contemptuous answer, probably thinking that if she were to bribe him in one instance, she might be subject to future applications. Foote replied: the Duchess rejoined with much asperity, sarcasm, and not without indecent allusions.

The correspondence was published, and appeared in all the public journals of the times, and is introduced by my old friend Mr. Cooke in his Life of Foote. Foote evidently conceived that the letters which bore the signature of the Duchess, were really the production of Jackson, and therefore, when he brought upon the stage his comedy called "A Trip to Calais," he introduced Jackson under the name of Dr. Viper, as Chaplain to Lady Kitty Crocodile, meaning the Duchess.

Here I may mention a cordial junction between those who were once adverse to each other, a cir-

cumstance indeed not uncommon in the fluctuation of human affairs. John Palmer, the actor, represented Jackson as Dr. Viper, imitating his manner, and copying the peculiarities of his dress with black frogs on his coat; yet a few years afterwards Palmer and Jackson became intimate friends, and co-operated in the erection of the Royalty Theatre, in the neighbourhood of that in Goodman's Fields, where Garrick first appeared on a London stage.

Jackson's first wife was the widow of a gentleman of Cornwall, who died before he came of age, otherwise he would have been possessed of 2000*l.* a-year, and of course have better provided for a widow. She was a woman of an excellent understanding, with great humour, though, as I have said, somewhat romantic. She died of a cancer in her breast, which she bore with great fortitude, and received all possible kindness and sympathy from her husband, who stood near her couch for hours, fanning her during the warmth of the season and the violence of her disorder.

I attended her funeral, which fully attested, by its expense, the respect of her husband, though whatever income she possessed expired with her. Jackson was a very gallant man, and much favoured by the ladies, but so negligent, that he suffered the letters from his fair correspondents to remain in his coat pocket, to which his wife had easy access. On one or two occasions, when the ladies had appointed Clement's Inn as the place for meeting with Jackson, his wife used to attend at the time and place, but Jackson was so prudent, that he was never seen, and therefore, though his wife was very jealous, she had no proof of his infidelity.

“The Public Ledger,” as I have said, was under a prosecution from Foote at the time when I became acquainted with Jackson, who then was the editor. The ground of the action was a series of letters on the charge against Foote, written with great bitterness by Jackson—no doubt by the instigation of the Duchess of Kingston, to whom Jackson appeared to be in the light of chaplain, though, from the lady’s character and conduct, however she might need religious consultation, she was not at all likely to require it. During the legal progress of the action, Foote luckily died, and put an end to the fears of the proprietor of “The Ledger.”

Among the friends and visitors of Mr. Jackson were old General Oglethorpe, who is immortalized in the lines of Pope, Horne Tooke, Francis Hargrave the eminent lawyer, Dr. Schomberg the younger, M.D. (not him of Bath, who lost the good opinion of the people of that city,) and other men of known talents, whom I do not at present recollect. Mr. Jackson was a staunch friend to popular freedom, long before the French Revolution spread its horrors over Europe. Besides the natural love of liberty which characterizes mankind, he caught the flame of freedom from the American Revolution.

Soon after the acknowledgment of the independence of our American colonies, he published a work entitled “The Constitutions of America,” with a preface and notes, all laudatory of the political principles on which their independence was founded. He continued his defence of those principles in “The Ledger” and “The Whitehall Evening Post,” and often paid me the compliment of reading to me his

lucubrations in the latter paper before he sent them to General Oglethorpe, Horne, and other friends.

In "The Public Ledger," he introduced a series of letters under the signature of "CURTIUS," which appeared, to my humble judgment, powerfully written. He seemed to insinuate that they were the production of "JUNIUS;" but he unconsciously betrayed the secret that they were his own, for he asked me if I knew any legal friend who would examine one of these letters, and tell me whether it could be safely published. I told him that I was intimate with Dr. Monsey, who often dined with his old friend Lord Walsingham, formerly Lord Chief-Justice De Grey, and that I would request the Doctor to submit it to his Lordship. When he put the MS. into my hand I saw that it was in his own handwriting, and that there were many erasures and interlineations. Hence I concluded that it must be his own composition; because I inferred that no other author, and particularly Junius, would permit him to take such liberties, and that, indeed, he would not have presumed to do so with the latter. The letter itself was throughout written with great vigour, but with a dangerous freedom, as is evident from the following passage, which I took pains to recollect, because it struck me as surprising that the writer could have a doubt whether it could be safely published. The letter was addressed to a great personage, now no more:—"The people no longer consider your ————'s appetite for blood as the military madness of a boy-monarch who wantons in new-obtained authority, but as the established affection of the full-blown man, serenely savage and delibe-

rately destructive." I took the letter to Dr. Monsey, who carried it to Lord Walsingham. His Lordship being then free from all the cares of public employment, kindly perused the letter, and Dr. Monsey told me that this was his Lordship's answer:—"It is ably written, but it is not Junius; and let the author be told, that if he is a candidate for fine, imprisonment, and the pillory, nobody can dispute his pretensions." The letter, in consequence of this opinion, was never published, and the letters of "CURTIUS," I believe, were no longer continued.

Mr. Jackson was afterwards editor of "The Morning Post," during the memorable Westminster scrutiny on the disputed election of Charles Fox. He was adverse to "the Champion of the People," as Mr. Fox's party then styled him. Mr. Jackson allotted a part of "The Morning Post" to an article which he called "The Scrutineer." In this article he varied his attacks upon the Fox party with great force and humour, it sometimes appearing as a Proclamation, sometimes as a Dialogue, sometimes as a Hue-and-cry, and under many other forms, which displayed the fertility of his powers, particularly as the literary hostility continued as long as the scrutiny. The party was galled, but had not wit, humour, and argument enough to answer him. "The Rolliad" alluded to these attacks, in mentioning—

"The lofty nothings of 'The Scrutineer,'"

but had nothing to say in plain prose.

I remember that the late Mr. Perry of "The Morning Chronicle" expressed his surprise to me at the vigour and variety of Jackson's powers, as they appeared in "The Scrutineer," though he was a de-

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terminated Foxite, and therefore likely to speak of it with indifference, if not with affected contempt, as he generally did of every thing that did not appear in his own journal.

I will mention but one anecdote of Mr. Perry, whom I knew upwards of thirty years. On the day after the Earl of Liverpool had stated the grounds of his charges against the late Queen Caroline, I met Mr. Perry in Piccadilly. We stopped, and spoke together in the presence of a mutual acquaintance, whom I do not now recollect. "Well," said I, "Perry, if these charges against the Queen are well-founded, the next thing that we shall hear of is, that she has poisoned herself or left the country." His answer, in his Scotch accent, was, "Ah! Jock, Jock, how little you know of that woman! She would pull down the throne of this country, if she were sure to be buried in the ruins." Yet the very next day, and during many following days, "The Morning Chronicle" was filled with praises of her merit, sympathy with her sufferings, and predictions of her triumph.

Mr. Jackson wrote in a very large hand when he wrote for the public press, and procured paper of proportionate magnitude for the purpose.

After the memorable scrutiny already alluded to, Mr. Jackson went abroad, and I lost sight of him for many years. One morning, as I was passing through a narrow new street in Marylebone, I saw a gentleman on the other side of the way who strongly resembled Jackson, but with a cocked-hat and his hair in a queue. I thought I must be mistaken. I remained still, and the gentleman looking at me gravely, crossed the way, took me by the arm, and

led me towards the fields. I then found it was Jackson. He asked if I would give him a beef-steak next day, and then he would tell me the reason why he returned to this country. I readily assented, and he came. I took care that nobody should intrude upon the party, and my mother and sister, who were well known to him, dined with us. As I was somewhat indisposed, I took a little brandy and water; and, with the exception of about four glasses of wine drunk by my mother and sister, Jackson actually despatched four bottles without being in the least affected, except with enlivened spirits.

He told me that he returned to England for the purpose of establishing a kind of "Magazin du Mode," consisting, not only of the fashions of France but of its current literature, to be published in French and English; and he asked me to introduce him to those who were likely to assist and promote the circulation of the work. The day passed with great pleasantry. Jackson was a great laughier, and spoke with contemptuous merriment of every thing in this country.

"I suppose," said he, "Pitt, Fox, and Burke are thought great men in this country?"

"Certainly," said I.

"Oh! poor, degenerate Britain!" said he, with a hearty laugh. "I suppose, too," he continued, "that the little man," (meaning the elder Boswell,) "whom I see trotting about Paris, is reckoned a great writer here?"

I answered that he had written a valuable biography of Dr. Johnson.

He laughed heartily again, exclaiming "That little, trotting man!—Oh, my God! And your friend Peter Pindar with his tinkling rhymes, which he calls poetry—I suppose he is considered here as a great poet?"

I answered that I thought he was, though he might give a better direction to his muse.

Then, with another laugh, he said, "I fear I must pity your taste, as well as that of the country."

My sister lived at that time in Queen-Anne-street West, and Jackson and myself attended her home; and highly were we gratified all the way with his unabated spirit and humour. After that night I never saw him, and the next melancholy intelligence which I heard of him was, that he was in custody in Dublin, and was to be tried for high-treason.

Before the trial took place, Mrs. Jackson (his second wife) came from Ireland, and called upon me at my house in Hatton-Garden. She told me that she came by the desire of her husband, who considered me as a friend not likely to forsake him in adversity, to ask me if I thought Government would consent to exchange him for Sir Sydney Smith, who was then confined in the prison of the Temple in Paris, as Mr. Jackson had interest with the French Government at that time, and could probably procure the consent of the latter. I apologised to her for giving an unwelcome answer; but said it was my opinion that Sir Sydney Smith, considering himself as a prisoner of war, would most probably refuse to assent to such an exchange, as Mr. Jackson did not stand in a similar predicament. Being a woman of sense, she was not offended at my openness, but seemed to

be convinced by what I said, intimating that, in desperate cases, any appearance of a remedy was eagerly adopted.

I saw her no more, except by accident in the street. She was a very fine and intelligent woman. She had two children by Mr. Jackson, the eldest a son, who is a merchant at Florence, with whom the mother resides. The son I have been in company with, and found an intelligent and amiable young man, who, not harbouring French principles, was obliged to quit a mercantile house in Leghorn when the revolutionary troops obtained possession of that place.

Mr. Jackson possessed learning and abilities which would have done honour to the Protestant Church. In my opinion, he was a zealot for liberty and the independence of his country, Ireland,—like many others, who had more to sacrifice in the cause than he ever possessed,—and not a rebellious incendiary hostile to the British throne. Such he appeared to many distinguished characters in Dublin by the long line of carriages which attended his funeral; and such he appears to me, or I should not have paid this humble tribute to the memory of an early and instructive friend. Mr. Jackson wrote an answer to Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny," eloquently opposing the doctor's arguments upon the principles of American independence. He was a great admirer of the works of Dr. Young, and went to Welwyn on purpose to see that celebrated writer, whose "Night Thoughts" he repeated with energetic effect, and his Satires with easy spirit.

Mr. Jackson had an odd species of ironical humour, both in his writing and conversation. Of the

former kind, I at present only recollect one instance. In an ironical letter to Lord North, when Prime Minister, which appeared in "The Ledger," he said, "My Lord, the people have such a sense of the blessings of your administration, that they long to be near you to testify the gratitude which they feel; but I would not advise you to come among them, lest in the eagerness of their emotions they should tear you to pieces in a transport of joy."

Before he was inflamed by the doctrines of America, and ensnared by those of revolutionary France, he was a zealous friend to the British Constitution, and used to characterise Wilkes as "a hackneyed old knave, a demagogue, and a blasphemer, whose patriotism was a pretext, and whose politics were a trade." I trust that I cannot be condemned for introducing in these trifling records an account of an unfortunate gentleman, to whom, in early life, I was indebted for many hours of solid pleasure and instruction, resulting from his learning, knowledge of the world, kindness, and friendship.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GEORGE CHALMERS, ESQ. With this gentleman I had many years the pleasure of being acquainted, and hold his memory in much respect. He was chiefly conversant with mercantile and political subjects, but also with works of general literature. He was one of the most indefatigable writers that perhaps ever existed, and subjects that were irksome and difficult to the world at large, might be said to be to him "familiar as his garters." The bullion question for instance, which was not only puzzling, unintelligible, and repulsive to others, was a subject which he satisfactorily explained, and rendered as easy to general comprehension, as general comprehension could admit. Even my late friend William Gifford, who was as sagacious a man as I ever knew, told me that he wished to understand the bullion question, but honestly declared, that the more he read and studied the subject, the less he understood it, his mind taking a retrograde direction.

Mr. Chalmers had been some years in America, but when I knew him he had a good appointment at the Board of Trade. As a proof of his love for, and knowledge of literary subjects, when young Ireland brought forward his pretended unpublished and unknown works of Shakspeare, he, like Dr. Parr and the elder Boswell, was deceived at first by the imposition. Boswell was so completely duped, that he dropped on his knees, and thanked God that he had lived to see

so many indubitable reliques of the divine bard. But Mr. Chalmers, upon farther search, considered them as fabrications; yet in vindication of himself and others who had been deluded by the imposition, he published an apology for the believers in the supposed Shakspeare manuscripts, books, &c. in which he displayed great research, knowledge, and acumen. He was not a little severe on my friend Mr. Malone, who wrote against the imposition, without having looked at the pretended reliques, and who had ridiculed those who had been betrayed into credulity.

Mr. Chalmers wrote many pamphlets on political subjects, chiefly in defence of government and Mr. Pitt's administration; and in all he wrote on those subjects, I am fully persuaded that he acted from the most perfect conviction, and was entirely exempt from any interested bias of gratitude or expectation. His "Caledonia" was his great work; three large volumes in quarto have been published, and I believe he had far advanced in the fourth, which would have concluded his labours on that subject. The work, though not finished, must be highly gratifying to the natives of Scotland, and to every admirer of antiquity, as the author had collected and recorded every thing which could illustrate the history, and contribute to the glory of that ancient kingdom.

The various works of Mr. Chalmers are innumerable, and I believe, his most intimate connexions would not be able to trace even a small part of them. But with all his sagacity, judgment, and perseverance, I cannot help thinking he was on some subjects too credulous and hasty in his conclusions. He conceived that Mr. Hugh Boyd, a young Irishman, was the author of "Junius's Letters," though not

only Boyd's age and condition in life were "strong against the deed," but his avowed works were so different from the style of Junius, as to preclude the supposition, though he studied and copied the manner of the great anonymous original. In his comments, however, on the language of Junius, Mr. Chalmers discovered many grammatical errors in those celebrated letters, and gave many strong reasons for believing that the author was an Irishman.

The arguments and citations in a work published by Mr. Taylor, the bookseller, are so strong in favour of Sir Philip Francis as the author, that an eminent law authority is said to have declared, they ought to be admitted in a court of Justice; and I heard Mr. Godwin once say, that he should have been convinced by that work, only that he knew Sir Philip Francis had not sufficient ability for such compositions as those celebrated letters.

Among the many reputed authors of that great anonymous work, Burke seems still to hold the ascendancy, and to be the mark of general suspicion. But independently of other reasons, there is, as I have before observed, such an essential character in the expansive and flowery style of Burke in his avowed publications, admitting all his literary merit and political knowledge, as seems to render it impossible for him to have supported one so unlike his own, to such an extent as to maintain it through the whole progress of the "Letters of Junius." As to Burke's voluntary denial to Dr. Johnson, that he was the author of "Junius," I should place no dependence on that declaration, relying on what I have heard of Burke's character, from those who were likely to understand it much better than the multitude.

Another proof of my friend Chalmers's hasty convictions was, his confident belief that Mr. Mathias was the author of "The Pursuits of Literature," insomuch that he actually put an advertisement in the newspapers, positively charging him with being the author, though there was only a rumour that he had been known to have had some hand in it as it passed through the press.

Mr. Chalmers told me that he intended to write a life of Thomson; but he did not live to fulfil his design—a subject of regret, as his inquiring and indefatigable mind would doubtless have produced an interesting biography of one of our greatest poets. Having mentioned to Dr. Wolcot that I had dined with Mr. Chalmers, and also the articles which he possessed that had belonged to Thomson, the doctor, who, like Thomson, saw everything with a poetical eye, asked me if I had not written something on this subject, and hence I was induced to write the following trifle.

TO GEORGE CHALMERS, ESQ.

The Possessor of a Table and Wine-Glasses which belonged to Thomson the Poet.

Friend Chalmers, 'tis a noble treat

At Thomson's hallow'd board to meet—

The bard of Nature's sphere—

The bard whom, long as ages roll,

And Nature animates the whole,

Taste, Virtue, will revere.

'Tis surely form'd of Britain's oak,

That bears her thunder's dreadful stroke

O'er all her subject main.

For, lo! Britannia's* sacred laws,

And Liberty's* congenial cause,

Inspired his patriot strain.

* Poems by Thomson.

Not Arthur's, with his knights around,
By fond tradition long renown'd,
Should equal thine in fame ;
Nor that where plates the Trojans ate,
Portentous of a happier fate,
Though graced with Virgil's name.

The Poet's goblets, too, are thine,—
With votive bumpers let them shine,
In Thomson's praise to ring,
Whose works through Summer's parching glow,
Sear'd Autumn, Winter's blighting snow,
Will bloom in endless Spring.

The nephew and namesake of this gentleman paid me the melancholy compliment of inviting me to the funeral of his uncle, which I accepted, willing to show my respect for the memory of a man, who, with all his zeal for literature and good government, was chiefly anxious to discover truth, and to promote the happiness of mankind.

The name of Chalmers naturally draws my attention to another friend, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for upwards of forty years, and who is still able to contribute to the benefit of the public by his writings, and by his intrinsic merits to the gratification of his numerous friends.

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, ESQ. This gentleman, by his talents, learning, and social character, has attracted a numerous train of friends, and they are such as are connected with him not merely by convivial intercourse, but by congenial powers and attainments. I have heard that he came from Aberdeen, intending to practise, after receiving due qualifications in that city, the profession of a surgeon in London, but finding, as the saying is, that "the market was overstocked," he turned his attention to

literary pursuits, and soon became well known as a man of talent and learning. He quickly obtained employment among those essential patrons of literature, the booksellers, and innumerable publications issued from his pen.

He has been long known as the editor of "The Biographical Dictionary," in which many of the articles were written by himself. He is also the editor of a collection of the works of the English poets, of most of whom lives are prefixed written by him, but he has modestly introduced all the lives written by Dr. Johnson, though it may truly be said that his own are not less characterised by judgment, certainly more distinguished by industrious research, and perhaps by purer taste and more candid criticism.

The only original work of imagination that I know to have been written by Mr. Alexander Chalmers, is a periodical paper, in three volumes, entitled "The Projector," which first appeared successively in numbers, in that venerable and valuable repository of literature, "The Gentleman's Magazine," which Mr. Chalmers afterwards collected and published, but to which, with hardly an excusable diffidence, he has declined to prefix his name. This is a work of great humour and of the purest moral tendency. It abounds with satirical irony, perhaps to an excess, demonstrating an extraordinary talent for that quality, and always rendering it subservient to a moral purpose.

Mr. Chalmers has published a History of the University of Oxford, in which every thing that taste and judgment could discover has been faithfully illustrated and recorded. During the whole of my long friendship with this gentleman, though occa-

sional sparring matches have passed between us, not the slightest tendency to ill-humour ever appeared on either part ; and if there had, it was more likely to have arisen on my side, on account of his powers of conversation, supported by various knowledge, and such an abundant store of anecdotes as few possess, and which none can relate with more point and effect.

I look back with pleasure on the time when we were both young and active, and used to take long walks together, dine at some tavern on our road, adjourn for an hour or two to one of the theatres, and finally end the night at the Turk's Head Coffee-house in the Strand, where we were sure to meet with facetious and intelligent friends ; among whom were Mr. George Gordon, a Scotch agent, a gentleman of great wit and humour, and with literary talents of no ordinary rate ; the learned and rather *too convivial* Porson ; the late Mr. Perry, proprietor of "The Morning Chronicle ;" sometimes the elder Boswell ; and "though last, not least" in social humour, the facetious Hewerdine, who possessed talents which, properly directed, would have rendered him a useful and valuable member of society, but who fell in the prime of life, a sacrifice to the uncontrollable indulgence of convivial excesses.

CHAPTER XXV.

JOHN KING, ESQ. In my early days I knew this celebrated character, so well known as the chief agent in his time for money-lenders, and who, being of the Jewish persuasion, was generally styled Jew King. I was acquainted with him for upwards of forty years. I have heard many reflections on his character, but can truly say that I never observed anything in his conduct, or ever heard him utter a sentiment, that could be injurious to his reputation. He was hospitable and attentive. He was fond of having men of talent at his table, and seemed capable of comprehending and of enjoying whatever fell from them. I introduced Dr. Wolcot to him, and he seemed thoroughly to understand his character and to relish his humour.

The Honourable Mrs. Grattan, sister of Lord Falkland, was one of his visitors, with her brothers, Lord Falkland and also the Honourable Charles Carey, afterwards Lord Falkland. Musical amateurs were among the parties who rendered the house an agreeable and elegant receptacle. Cards were seldom introduced, and I never observed that, when they were, there were high stakes or high betting. From all I could observe of Mr. King, I had never the least reason to believe that any of his invitations were for pecuniary purposes. He was extensively concerned in money transactions by all accounts, and chiefly with young Irish noblemen,

not much renowned for rectitude,—and if he raised money for them, and they violated their obligations, the odium was thrown upon him ; yet, as he carried on this business for the greater part of his life, and still found employment, it may be supposed that the lenders, at least, continued to place confidence in him.

Lady Lanesborough, who appeared as his wife, it is said could not be really so, because he had married early in life, according to the Jewish rites, and the first wife was then alive. It cannot be doubted, however, that he was united to her according to the forms of the Church of England, and I never heard he was disturbed by the claims of the first wife. Lady Lanesborough was a very sensible woman, and very elegant in her manners. She appeared to me exactly to conform to the idea of what is styled a woman of quality. It has been doubted, as I have said, whether she was really married to Mr. King, but, unless the marriage had taken place, it is not to be supposed that he would have been permitted to control her property by her family, particularly by my old friend Mr. Danvers Butler, her son, a very spirited and intelligent man, who lived in King's house, and appeared to be upon the most friendly terms with him.

I became acquainted with Lord Falkland at Mr. King's. He was rather of a grave disposition, but sensible of humour. I was rather more intimate with his brother Charles, a naval officer, who succeeded to the title. The last time I saw him, he told me that he had acquired about 30,000*l.* prize-money, and as we had often talked of taking a beef-steak together, he said that within a fortnight he would fix the day ; but, about a week after, I heard

the melancholy account of his death in a duel with Mr. Powell, whom he had called "Pogy," and who resented it in him, though it was a nick-name by which he was generally designated among his friends. This last Lord Falkland was a handsome, fine-looking man, good-humoured, and esteemed a very gallant officer.

Mr. Holcroft and Mr. Godwin were frequent visitors at Mr. King's, and other men of talent, whom I do not now remember. Holcroft was inclined to bring forward his philosophical opinions, and was irritable if contradicted; but Godwin was more guarded, and seldom spoke. King sometimes mixed in the conversation with both, and generally made shrewd answers to them.

Mr. King was an able writer on political subjects, and instituted a public journal, the name of which I have forgotten, and which had but a short duration. Lady Lanesborough survived him, and I heard from one of the family that she fainted on hearing of his death. In the early part of his life he was a great admirer of pugilism, and was esteemed a good boxer. When I first knew Mr. King, he used after dinner to introduce Humphrey, his foot-boy, and spar with him. Humphrey derived the rudiments of his art from his master. King was always his friend when he became a pugilist by profession.

Lady Lanesborough had a daughter as well as a son by her first husband, who had been many years married before I had the pleasure of being introduced to her. She was styled the Marchioness of Mariscotti; and among all my acquaintance with the female sex she was one of the most amiable and interesting women I ever knew. There was an

ingenuous simplicity in her manners that seemed almost to approach to the innocence of childhood, only that her good sense, knowledge, and accomplishments were thoroughly accordant with her time of life and her rank.

My old friend Mr. Brooke, whose knowledge of life could rarely be equalled, used to characterise this lady by the epithet of "guileless," and never, I believe, was an epithet more appropriate. Mr. Butler, her brother, took the addition of Danvers to his name, having married an heiress of considerable fortune of that name. I was introduced to her, but my acquaintance with her was very short, as she died soon after. She appeared to be an amiable domestic character. She left one son, with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, but I shall say no more than that I respect him for his manners and character.

Mr. King, during my long acquaintance with him, experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. I have sometimes seen him riding in his carriage with Lady Lanesborough and his family, and other times trudging through the streets arm in arm with her in very indifferent weather. He was a remarkably good-humoured man, and I never heard a splenetic word from him. I have understood that when any of his literary friends have not been successful in their publications, he has purchased many copies of their works, to distribute gratuitously among his connexions.

I know that Mr. King's character was the subject of severe animadversions, but as all I observed of him was creditable to him, I will not be deterred from paying this tribute to his memory, as I have

enjoyed many pleasant hours at his table, but had no other obligation to him than what I derived from the accomplished and intelligent society which I met at his hospitable mansion.

I must not forget to mention the second wife of Mr. Butler Danvers, previously Miss Sturt, and the sister of my friend Captain Sturt, R.N. She was beautiful in her person, engaging in her manners, and, though accustomed to all the splendour and gaieties of fashionable life, was unaffected, cheerful, and possessed every domestic virtue calculated

Well-ordered home man's chief delight to make.

The Honourable MRS. GRATTAN, sister of Lord Falkland, whom I have mentioned as one of the visitors to Lady Lanesborough and Mr. King, was very handsome, and an intelligent woman; but, different from handsome women in general, she seemed to be regardless of the influence of her person, and rather desirous to strike by her understanding and accomplishments. She was very fond of music, and by great labour was able to perform two or three concertos on the pianoforte, but did not seem to possess any genius for music, or much taste. She was strongly impregnated with the pride of birth, but was by no means deficient in common sense. She thought that she possessed dramatic talents, and sent me a play of her writing, desiring my judgment. I honestly gave my opinion, which was by no means favourable, and she paid me the compliment of suppressing it.

I am chiefly induced to mention this lady in order to show, that with all the consciousness of her rank, and all the pride of her attainments,

finding her income not sufficient to support herself in this country, she had the good sense to stoop from her elevation and leave England, and go to America, or one of our West India islands, where she opened a milliner's shop and died in obscurity, but not without obtaining respect for character and conduct. She was one of the first persons who patronised the talents of the late Mr. Davy, the musical composer, from whom she received lessons, as well as from Mr. Jackson, generally styled Jackson of Exeter, who had originally been a portrait-painter, but renounced that profession in favour of music, in which his genius and taste were justly admired, particularly in the compositions which he adapted to works of Hammond, Lord Lyttelton, and Dr. Wolcot. His latest compositions were chiefly confined to the lyric works of Dr. Wolcot, with whom he had long been in habits of friendship and confidence.

I became acquainted with him at the house of the late Mr. Opie, the celebrated painter. Mr. Jackson possessed an excellent understanding, and literary talents of no ordinary description. If he had devoted himself wholly to literary pursuits, he would probably have rendered himself conspicuous by his profound knowledge of the world. His work entitled "Thirty Letters on various Subjects," is highly creditable to his talents and knowledge of human nature. He presented it to me, as well as several of his musical pieces set to the words of Dr. Wolcot. He was a tall, good-looking man, with an expressive face, and a reserved and grave demeanour. He appeared to me to be well acquainted with history, and with the opinions of the ancient philosophers. His talents as a painter, I understand, were by no means

first-rate, but, according to the report of Mr. Opie and Dr. Wolcot, he was an admirable judge of painting.

It is said that he was austere in his domestic character, and something of that disposition was observable in his general intercourse with society. Indeed, his burying himself at Exeter, when he might have been conspicuous in the metropolis, may be considered as a proof that he was of a retired, if not of a saturnine cast of mind. He was one of the very few men whom Doctor Wolcot, a shrewd judge of mankind, regarded with particular respect for his intellectual powers; and another was Dr. Whitaker, the historian of Manchester, and who engaged in the controversy respecting the character of Mary Queen of Scots. The latter told Wolcot that he envied him the power of making people laugh by his writings, which he said he had often attempted to do in his own, but had never succeeded.

Whitaker was also a man who confined himself to the country, though eminently qualified by his powers and acquirements for a more distinguished sphere of action. The wisest men are not exempted from pride, and though he held the situation of organist in Exeter, Jackson was offended if he heard himself mentioned as "Mr. Jackson, the organist." He was unaffected in his manners, but took no pains to please in company, and seemed indifferent as to what impression he was likely to make, as if his opinions were settled, and he was not disposed to enter into any controversy in support of them.

Mr. Davy, a native also of Exeter, was a man of great musical talents, which he discovered very early, and in a singular manner, as has been stated

in several accounts. His music to the opera of "The Blind Boy," is a striking proof of his science and taste. I became acquainted with him soon after he came from Exeter, and was settled in London. He was a good performer on the piano-forte, and an able teacher. When I first knew him, he was somewhat of a beau, and his hair was always well powdered; but he fell into an unfortunate habit of drinking, and became at last so negligent of his person, as to be really offensive. Of course he lost his scholars, particularly females, and was at length reduced to very great distress, and was chiefly supported by the casual contributions of those acquaintances whom he happened to meet, or whose residence he could discover.

Musical professors in general are very kind to any of their community who are in distress, and I have been informed that several of them subscribed to provide a decent interment for poor Davy, otherwise he would probably have been buried at the expense of the parish.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LORD BYRON. I became acquainted with this nobleman in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre, at a time when he was one of the committee of management, and, as well as I can recollect, I was introduced to him by Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, who was also a member of the same body. He had so little the appearance of a person above the common race of mankind that, as lawyers were concerned in the affairs of that theatre, I took him for one of that profession, or a clerk; nor when I first saw his features, before I was introduced to him, did I perceive any of that extraordinary beauty which has since been ascribed to him; but soon after, knowing who he was, and gratified by the politeness of his manner, I began to see "Othello's visage in his mind," and, if I did not perceive the reported beauty, I thought I saw striking marks of intelligence, and of those high powers which constituted his character.

I had but little intercourse with him in the green-room; and as a proof how slight an impression his features made upon me, I was sitting in one of the boxes at the Haymarket Theatre, the partition of the boxes only dividing me from a person in the next box, who spoke to me, and as I did not know who he was, he told me he was Lord Byron. I was much pleased with his condescension in addressing me, though vexed that I did not recollect him; and I then paid more attention to him than to the

performance on the stage. We conversed for some time in a low tone, that we might not annoy the people around us, and I was highly gratified in leaving all the talk to his lordship, consistent with the necessity of an occasional answer. I then took care to examine his features well, that, being near-sighted in some degree, I might not forget him.

I still think that the beauty of his features has been much exaggerated, and that the knowledge of his intellectual powers, as manifested in his works, has given an impression to the mind of the observer which would not have been made upon those who saw him without knowing him. The portraits by my friends Mr. Westall and Mr. Phillips, are the best likenesses that I have seen of him; and the prints from other artists have very little resemblance, though some of them have been confidently bruited to the world.

I was in the habit of visiting the green-rooms of both theatres, but went oftener to Drury Lane, in order to cultivate an acquaintanceship with Lord Byron, who always received me with great kindness; and particularly one night when I had returned from a public dinner and met him in the green-room, though I had by no means drunk much wine, yet, as I seemed to him to be somewhat heated and appeared to be thirsty, he handed me a tumbler of water, as he said to *dilute* me. Having a short time before published a small volume of poems, I sent them to his lordship, and in return received the following letter from him, with four volumes of his poems, handsomely bound, all of his works that had been published at that time. I took the first sen-

tence of the letter as a motto for a collection of poems which I have since published.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for a volume in the good old style of our elders and our betters, which I am very glad to see not yet extinct. Your good opinion does me great honour, though I am about to risk its loss by the return I make for your valuable present. With many acknowledgements for your wishes, and a sincere sense of your kindness, believe me,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

BYRON.

13, Piccadilly Terrace, July 23rd, 1815.

In addition to this kind and flattering letter, his lordship inscribed the first volume in the following terms :

TO JOHN TAYLOR. ESQ.

With the author's compliments and respects,

July 23rd, 1815.

His lordship's volumes, his gratifying letter, and the kind attention which I received from him in the green-room, induced me to express my thanks in a complimentary sonnet to him, which was inserted in "The Sun" newspaper, of which I was then the proprietor of nine-tenths. The remaining tenth share was to belong to a gentleman, when the profits of that share should amount to a sum which was the assigned price of each share, and at which price I purchased, by degrees, all my shares. By the oversight of the attorney employed, the gentleman alluded to, during the previous proprietorship, was

invested with the sole and uncontrolled editorship of the paper, under such legal forms that even the proprietors could not deprive him of his authority. When the former two proprietors, of whom one was the founder of the paper, found into what a predicament they had been thrown, they signified their wishes to withdraw from the concern, and I purchased their respective shares, in addition to what I had bought before at a considerable expense, conceiving that the editor would relax from his authority, and that we should proceed in harmony together. But I was mistaken, and after much and violent dissension between us, I was at last induced to offer him 500*l.* to relinquish all connexion with the paper, which sum he accepted, and it then became entirely my own.

During his control over the paper, the day after my sonnet addressed to Lord Byron appeared, the editor thought proper to insert a parody on my lines in "The Sun" newspaper, in which he mentioned Lord Byron in severe terms, and in one passage adverted to Lady Byron. Shocked and mortified at the insertion of this parody in a paper almost entirely my own, I wrote immediately to Lord Byron, explaining my situation, and expressing my sincere regret that such an article had appeared in the paper, and stating my inability to prevent it. My letter produced the following one from his lordship, which I lent to my friend Mr. Moore, and which he has inserted in his admirable life of the noble bard.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry that you should feel uneasy at what has by no means troubled me. If your editor, his

correspondents, and readers, are amused, I have no objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can find room for, provided his lucubrations are confined to *me* only. It is a long time since things of this kind have ceased to "fright me from my propriety," nor do I know any similar attack which would induce me to turn again, unless it involved those connected with me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt them, even in the eyes of those who bear no good will to myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur, to *reverse* the saying of Dr. Johnson, "What the law cannot do for me, I would do for myself," be the consequences what they might. I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the letters. The poems I hope you intend me to keep, at least I shall do so, till I hear the contrary.

Very truly yours,

BYRON.

13, Terrace, Piccadilly, Sept. 25th, 1815.

In a subsequent letter from his lordship to me, referring to the same subject, there is the following postscript. "P. S. Your best way will be to publish no more eulogies, except upon the 'elect;' or if you do, to let him (the editor) have a previous copy, so that the compliment and the attack may appear together, which would, I think, have a good effect."

This last letter is dated Oct. 27th 1815, more than a month after the other, so that it is evident the subject dwelt upon his lordship's mind, though in the postscript he has treated it jocularly. The letter dated Sept. 25th, is interesting, because it shows, that though his lordship was indifferent to any attacks on himself, he was disposed to come

resolutely, if not rashly, forward in defence of Lady Byron, of whose amiable qualities he could not but be deeply sensible, and it is therefore a lamentable consideration, that a separation should have taken place between persons so eminently qualified to promote the happiness of each other.

Before her marriage, Lady Byron was the theme of universal esteem and admiration to all who had the pleasure of being acquainted with her, and there can be no doubt that in her matrimonial state she fully maintained her pretensions to the same favourable estimation, though untoward circumstances, unfortunately too common in conjugal life, may have occasioned the melancholy event of a separation.

I remember that soon after the marriage I dined with Mrs. Siddons, and know no person who was better able to appreciate character, and to pay due homage to personal worth than that lady. Referring to the recent marriage, she said, "If I had no other reason to admire the judgment and taste of Lord Byron, I should be fully convinced of both, by his choice of a wife."

It is impossible to review the character and talents of Lord Byron without entertaining a high respect for his memory. That he possessed strong passions is too evident; but they were accompanied by a generous and forgiving disposition, as my friend Mr. Moore's valuable life of him demonstrates. His poetical powers, though certainly of a high order, have perhaps, like the beauty of his person, been represented in too favourable a light. They were chiefly of a satirical and descriptive kind. He could draw characters with great force and beauty, as well

those of masculine and ferocious energy, as of female softness, delicacy, and exquisite feeling; but perhaps if we were to search in his works for that species of poetical excellence which is denominated the sublime, and which is the essence of true poetry, we should be disappointed.

I feel somewhat abashed at thus venturing to criticise the works of so popular a writer; but much as I respect his memory, and feel sensible of his kindness to me, I may be permitted to express my opinion, considering the high reputation which he acquired, and the great poets who do honour to the literary character of the country, and whose names seem to have sunk into comparative oblivion.

As Lord Byron made so conspicuous a figure in society, and will always remain so in the literary world, it may not be an incurious speculation to reflect on what he might have been if he had not been born to rank and affluence. That he possessed great poetical talents, nobody can deny; and it must be equally admitted that he was born with strong passions. It is hardly to be doubted, that whatever had been the condition of his parents, they would have discovered uncommon qualities of mind in him, and would have afforded him as good an education as their means would have allowed. Born in humble life, he would not have been exposed to the flattery of sycophants, which always surround the inheritor of title and wealth, and his talents would have taken the direction which nature might have suggested, and his passions have been restrained from extravagance and voluptuousness. He would have been free from the provocation of captious

criticism, and therefore would probably have employed his muse in description, sentiment, and reflection, rather than in satire and licentiousness.

That Lord Byron was generous and affectionate, is evident from Mr. Moore's masterly biographical work ; and this temper, influenced by his situation among persons in ordinary life, would probably have operated with benevolence and philanthropy. His faults may therefore be conceived to have been the consequence of the rank in which he was born, and the allurements, as well as provocations, to which he was exposed. It has been said that the deformity of his foot contributed to sour his temper, but if he had been obliged to support himself by his talents, his chagrin on that account might have passed from him "like dew-drops from the lion's mane." In my opinion Lord Byron was naturally a kind, good-hearted, and liberal-minded man ; and, as far as he was otherwise, it was the unavoidable result of the rank to which he was born, and its incidental temptations.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE EARL OF ELDON. The first time that I had the honour of being introduced to this venerable nobleman was when he was Mr. Scott, an eminent barrister, and so easy and unaffected in his manners that he was generally designated with the name of Jack Scott by his brethren of the bar. His early friend, Mr. Richard Wilson, for some reason generally styled Dick Wilson, gave a dinner, and by desire of Mr. Alderman Skinner, Mr. Scott and Mr. Joseph Richardson were particularly invited, and I was one of the party, with other friends. The object of Mr. Skinner was, if possible, to engage Mr. Scott and Mr. Richardson to take opposite sides in any subject that might happen to occur, though it was hardly possible, considering the rate of Mr. Skinner's intellects, and the extent of his attainments, that he was likely to derive much advantage from the controversy, if it happened to fall within the reach of his capacity.

Mr. Richardson had been let into the secret, and therefore, before the company assembled, Mr. Richardson took me aside, complimented me on my prolific power of talking nonsense, and requested that I would endeavour, by the introduction of any flippant facetiousness, to prevent the expected disputation,

observing that Mr. Scott was a practised logician, and likely to be the conqueror if a difference of opinion should arise ; but it was probable that they might concur in sentiment, and that at all events, as the meeting was for the purpose of general good humour, it would be absurd to introduce topics in the discussion of which the company in general were not likely to engage. I endeavoured to justify my friend Richardson's compliment on my genius for nonsense, succeeded in spreading harmless merriment, and thereby obviated all prospect of controversial emulation. But this state of things interfered so much with the worthy alderman's design, that he took me aside, told me that as I was a young man just entering into the world, and as he had risen to a distinguished station in society, it might be in his power to render me service ; he then unfolded the object of the meeting, which he requested I would endeavour to forward, rather than retard, and assured me, that, by the contention between two such able men as Mr. Scott and Mr. Richardson, I should improve by their respective arguments. I affected to assent, but, not being ambitious of the patronage of the civic sage, I soon resumed the same flippant gaiety, and being a bit of a singer in those days, gave the company a Bacchanalian air, which, on account of its jovial sentiments, not my musical merit, was encored, and such a spirit of convivial merriment ensued, that the worthy magistrate gave up all hopes of argumental improvement in despair, and retired. The rest of the company followed him by degrees, and at length nobody was left but Mr. Scott, myself, and our hospitable landlord.

I remember that, inspired by Bacchus, rather than by the Cumæan Sibyl, as Mr. Scott sat on a sofa, I felt a prophetic glow, and said "There sits an embryo Chancellor." Mr. Scott laughed at my jovial prediction, and required a repetition of my song; and as Mr. Wilson tells me, for I confess I recollect no more, Mr. Scott arose from the sofa, and placing himself at the door, declared that I should not depart till I had repeated the song. From that time the noble lord has favoured me with his kind attention, and when I have had the pleasure of meeting him, has sometimes referred to our merry meeting, and my prophetic inspiration.

Often has he favoured me with his arm when we happened to be walking the same way; and I must indulge myself in the pride of stating that in the tea-room, where the company assembled after the last celebration, in 1829, of Mr. Pitt's birth-day, he greeted me with his usual kindness, and said in the hearing of the company, that he should be glad to see me whenever I would call upon him. His noble brother, Lord Stowell, whom I had first the pleasure of meeting at the elegant table of Sir Joshua Reynolds, has honoured me ever since with the same condescending affability; and it is with pride and gratitude I add that they were both liberal subscribers to the volumes of poems, which I published by the advice and under the patronage of a numerous host of subscribers, many of whom were of high rank, His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex at the head, and the whole list constituting such an honourable testimony in favour of my character, as might, in a great degree, compensate for the frowns of fortune.

THE EARL OF COVENTRY. I have had the pleasure of ranking this nobleman among my early friends, and many happy days have I passed at his hospitable table, in company with his amiable countess, their accomplished daughters, and the lively and intelligent male branches of the family. My first acquaintance with his lordship was within a few years after he was deprived of sight. He consulted my father, the most eminent oculist of his day, but the case unfortunately admitted not of a remedy, and his lordship has uniformly borne this lamentable deprivation with philosophic fortitude and resignation.

Lord Coventry was educated at Westminster school, and when Dr. Smith, then head master, was asked who had been the most promising of his scholars in his time, he said that he could have no doubt or hesitation in saying the Earl of Coventry, then Lord Deerhurst. The chief amusement of the noble lord since his unfortunate loss of sight, has been the composition of Latin verses, and in translating English poetry into the Latin language.

Mr. SAMUEL FOOTE. This celebrated character, who was conspicuous as an author as well as an actor, figured on the stage of life before I became at all connected with the theatrical world, except as a mere spectator. I have, however, often seen him act, and have a full recollection of his manner. He performed the characters written by and for himself in his own dramas with admirable humour and effect, and far beyond any of his successors, though some of them, particularly the elder Bannister, imitated his manner with great success. His voice was harsh and unequal, and if now imitated in private

life, it would be difficult to believe that it ever could have been endured on the stage, but the public had been used to it, and his intrepid confidence and spirit were powerfully effective.

I have seen him perform Fondlewife in "The Old Bachelor," and Gomez, in "The Spanish Friar," but his manner was by no means suited to the regular drama, though his good sense and broad humour rendered him very entertaining. He was vain, and always wished to be more forward on the stage than any of his fellow performers; and as he was the manager, they of course submitted to appear rather in the back-ground. If he had not possessed so much dramatic ability, and the stage had been his only resource, he must have been contented with a very subordinate situation on the public boards, if, indeed, he had been tolerated at all.

I have been surprised that my old friend Arthur Murphy should have entertained so high an opinion of Foote as a wit, since there are very few proofs of such original jocularity as might be expected, considering he had acquired so high a reputation for *bons mots* and repartees. I have often wished there had been some record of that facetious fecundity which rendered Foote's conversational powers so entertaining to people of all ranks, for those sallies of his inexhaustible humour which have reached public notice, by no means afford such samples of original wit as to give adequate support to his high reputation, and I conceive that his dramatic works may be considered as the chief foundation of his intellectual character. For my part, such has been my ill-luck, that I have been generally disappointed when I have come into the company of professed wits.

Mr. Murphy never used to mention him without styling him the great, the famous, or the celebrated Mr. Foote, and we also find these epithets applied to him by Mr. Murphy in his *Life of Garrick*. Mr. Murphy had often signified his intention to write a life of Foote, and, during my long intimacy with him I have heard him repeat all the *bons mots*, and odd remarks of this "Mr. Merryman." Well remembering these good things, as they were deemed, I communicated them to my friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister, who had collected many more, and who has since given them to the public in his *Life of Foote*. I have recently looked over them, in order to see if I could recover any of them for my own use, but did not think them worth the transfer.

It was Foote's constant aim to make the servants leave the room laughing, wherever he visited, and it may easily be conceived that the jokes must be of a very coarse nature that were inspired by such a grovelling ambition. Soon after he became settled, he sent for his wife, from whom he had been separated many years, and desired Mr. Costello, an actor who valued himself upon his skill as a driver, to bring her in a one-horse chaise, a common vehicle at that time, to his house at Blackheath. Costello, with all his skill, overturned the chaise, and poor Mrs. Foote fell with her face upon some hard gravel, which disfigured her so much that she was obliged to put on a veil.

When the company who were expected to dinner arrived, Foote told them of her disaster, and sacrificing humanity, and even decency for a joke, pulled aside her veil, and said he would show them "a map of the world." He then said, pointing to the

several bruises on her face, "There is the yellow Ganges, here is the Red Sea;" and, after more allusions of the same kind, concluded with touching her forehead, and adding "Here are the rocks of Scilly."

A day or two after the death of his wife, he dined with a party, and affected to weep for his loss, but his weeping was intended to have a ludicrous effect upon the servants, and to complete the joke he said, that he had been all the morning seeking for "a second-hand coffin to bury her in." This declaration was irresistible upon the servants, and having thus accomplished his purpose, he was as facetious as ever through the remainder of the day.

These may be considered as samples of his general pretensions to the character of a wit. Yet he must have had some power of diverting, since even Dr. Johnson, in spite of his predetermination to maintain a sullen silence, was obliged to give way to Foote's overbearing "broad-faced" merriment.

Dr. Johnson having heard that Foote had called him "a learned Hottentot," the doctor in return styled him "a pleasant villain."

That Foote was a good scholar, was universally admitted, and a good dramatic writer, must also be acknowledged; but his works were chiefly attractive from their impudent personality, and his whimsical exhibition of characters drawn by himself, and for his own peculiar talents.

I was surprised also that there should have been so great an intimacy between Murphy and Foote, considering the difference of their characters. Murphy was very grave, and never attempted wit, but was successful in relating the wit of others. Foote was

never grave, but always on the watch for something to excite a jest ; and as he had no regard for friendship, morality, or decency, Murphy must have been his butt as well as all his other friends.

I believe that Mr. Murphy relinquished the intention to write Foote's life, on account of the charge that was brought against him, for I have heard him say that he believed Foote was guilty. He added, that it would be a difficult task to get over ; " but," said he, " if I should ever write his life, I should be contented with saying, that he was acquitted by a jury of his countrymen." The life, however, has been ably written by Mr. Cooke, who has brought forward everything that could tend to do honour to his hero, but has still supported his own character as an impartial biographer.

Foote's manner of relating a humorous story, with his powers of mimicry, must doubtless have been very entertaining to those who were not too refined for fun, or too delicate for buffoonery. Mr. Murphy used to relate the following story of Foote's, the heroines of which were the Ladies Cheere, Fielding, and Hill, the last the widow of the celebrated Dr. Hill. He represented them as playing at " I love my love with a letter ; Lady Cheere began, and said, " I love my love with an N, because he is a Night ;" Lady Fielding followed with " I love my love with a G, because he is a Gustis ;" and " I love my love with an F," said Lady Hill, " because he is a Fizishun." Such was the imputed orthography of these learned ladies.

Foote never was able to bear the charge that was brought against him, which certainly hastened his

end ; for though he affected to keep up his spirits, on his return to the stage Mr. Cooke says that he exhibited a lamentable decay, both in mind and person. Peace to his manes !

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WILLIAM COOKE, ESQ. This gentleman, whom I have mentioned in the previous article, was one of my early friends. He came from Cork, after having been engaged in a mercantile concern contrary to his inclination, and arrived in London in the year 1766. He was married when very young to a lady rather older than himself, who possessed good property, but, as they mixed in all the gaieties of fashionable life, it was soon dissipated. The lady lived about two years after the marriage ; and his purpose in visiting London, soon after her death, was to adopt the profession of the law. He entered himself of the Middle Temple, and in due time was called to the bar ; but finding little encouragement to pursue the profession which he had chosen, wholly devoted himself to the labours of the pen. He had brought from Ireland letters of recommendation to Dr. Goldsmith, to Edmund Burke and his brother Richard. With Dr. Goldsmith he retained an intimacy till the death of that excellent writer ; but notwithstanding his high admiration of Edmund Burke's powers, he had no confidence in his integrity, or that of his brother

Richard, and having been nearly involved in a heavy debt by the latter, he did not cultivate a connexion with either.

Mr. Cooke's first publication was a poem entitled "The Art of living in London," which contained a good description of the manners of the time, and some useful precepts for avoiding its dangers. His friend Goldsmith supplied the title of this poem, and revised the whole. It was very successful, and soon went through a second edition. He then published a work, entitled, "Elements of Dramatic Criticism," and wrote many political pamphlets, under the patronage of the Duke of Richmond, and Lord Shelburn, afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne.

Mr. Cooke was well acquainted with the chief wits of the time, and when Dr. Johnson formed his Essex Street Club, he nominated Mr. Cooke as the first member.

Mr. Cooke was employed in reporting the debates in the House of Lords, and in the India House, for the public journals. He was also a theatrical reporter, and became a proprietor in a daily newspaper, but soon sold his share from a conviction of the uncertainty of that kind of property. He was married to his second wife before I became acquainted with him. She was a handsome and very amiable lady. By her he had fifteen children, but most of them died young; the last a daughter, who reached her fifteenth year, and then sunk into the grave with the rest.

Mr. Cooke was a warm friend of Mrs. Abington. He altered for her the comedy of "The Capricious Lady," originally written by Beaumont and Fletcher, and she increased her reputation by appearing as

the heroine of the piece. By his connexion with the public press, he was able to give support to her professional exertions. Mrs. Abington was much alive to public notice, and peculiarly fearful of critical censure.

Mr. Cooke's last work was a didactic poem, entitled "Conversation," in which he enumerates the merits and defects of colloquial intercourse, with critical acumen, and knowledge of mankind. This poem he dedicated to his old friend John Symmons, Esq. of Paddington, whose character he introduced under the name of Florio. I had for many years the pleasure of being intimate with Mr. Symmons; and a more liberal, elegant, and hospitable character never existed. He is still alive, at a very advanced age, and with a reverse of fortune, which all who knew him must deeply regret, as it was chiefly the result of the generosity, I may say, the magnificence of his mind, his confidence in false friends, and an incautious disposal of his property. He found it necessary to leave England, and I fear is involved in the unhappy events which now overwhelm the Netherlands, to which country he has retired, and where he intended to pass the remainder of his life.

The REV. CHARLES SYMMONS, D.D. This gentleman was the brother of the respected friend whom I have just mentioned. His learning and poetical talents are so well known, that it would be presumptuous in me to pay homage to merits generally acknowledged, and which I cannot pretend to appreciate. I was introduced to him at the hospitable table of his brother, and have been very often a happy guest at his own. He was a friend to mankind, but perhaps, considering his sacred calling, too

free in the manifestation of his political principles. These principles are evident in his "Life of Milton," and in his other works. They were also avowed in sermons which he delivered from the pulpit. It is not to be supposed that he wished for a republic, for he was firmly attached to the British Constitution, and proud of the friendship of His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, who may justly be ranked among the friends of mankind, as well as an admirer of that unrivalled constitution which seated his family on the throne of this country.

The late Mr. Windham was a friend of Dr. Symonds, and was anxious to advance him in the church, but the doctor's open avowal of his political principles prevented Mr. Windham from being as active in his cause as he expected, and in consequence a languor fell upon their friendship. The doctor's pretensions to preferment were of the most solid kind, in point of learning and moral conduct, and he might have been raised to high ecclesiastical dignities if he had not been so solicitous to appear as a patriot and a politician. He published a volume of poems, written by himself and one of his daughters, who died in the bloom of life, and which are highly creditable to the taste and genius of both.

His translation of the "Æneid," a work of great learning and poetical merit, was first published in a quarto volume, but soon reached to a second edition, which appeared in two volumes octavo. He paid me the unmerited compliment of sending to me the proofs of every book, as they came from the press, of which I did not presume to judge as a translation, but merely ventured occasionally to suggest some alterations in the English version. When the second

edition was published, I introduced a succession of observations on the whole in "The Sun" newspaper, of which I was then the proprietor. These observations were so satisfactory to the doctor as to excite such a tribute of gratitude as I am at once proud and ashamed to record. Yet I might well be suspected of false modesty if I were to suppress such a testimony in my favour from so distinguished a scholar, and so excellent a poet. I shall therefore venture to insert the conclusion of the preface to the Second Edition of his Translation of the "*Æneid*," regretting that I do not deserve such commendation, yet highly gratified at having received so honourable and flattering a tribute of partial friendship.

After having referred to the charge brought against him by certain critics, who had spoken unfavourably of his work, of having Latinized too much, he concludes in the following words:—"But I must withdraw even from the shadow of controversy the remaining portion of my small sheet (the Preface), that I may consecrate it to the better feelings of my heart. Let me now, then, say, that there is a public writer, of extended celebrity throughout the political and the literary world, to whom my thankfulness is largely due, and to whom I am happy in this opportunity of avowing the magnitude of my obligation. Acquainted with me, originally, by my publications, and conciliated by his partial estimation of their merits, the Proprietor of "THE SUN" paper has uniformly encouraged me with his plaudit; and in the circulation of his popular pages my name has been agitated into life. Unfeed and unsolicited, without the hope of any other recompense than that which he derived from his own approbation, and,

let me add, with a high disdain of that party spirit which in these bad days has arrayed man against man, and torn brother from brother, he has devoted, not his paragraphs, but his columns, to the display of my poor muse ; and has hazarded the established reputation of his own literary judgment, whilst he has been placing wreaths upon her unrespected brow. For all this kindness,

—— ‘Grates persolvere dignas
Non opis est nostræ.’

“If in the train of the Mantuan Bard, I could hope to visit posterity, it would be gratifying to think that, by eyes yet withheld by interposing centuries from the light, this small record of my gratitude would be read, and the name of JOHN TAYLOR be seen thus closely associated with that of

“CHARLES SYMMONS.”

“March 20, 1820.”

There are several living friends whom I would introduce with pleasure in this work, but as justice and gratitude might be imputed to very different motives, I fear to mention them ; I cannot, however, deny myself the gratification of acknowledging the kindness of John Soane, Esq. the celebrated architect, and of Prince Hoare, Esq. who kindly came forward to cheer me in the time of unexpected adversity, and manifested such condoling sympathy and such zealous friendship, as I must always gratefully remember, though I can never hope to return.

The present work has been written in a desultory manner, with several intervals, occasioned by illness, which, at one time, was of so alarming a description that my friend Mr. Cooke, and another eminent

surgeon, thought it hardly possible that I should recover. I might easily have extended it, but was tired of the task, and was urged to conclude it by my friends, who cherished such hopes of its success as I fear will be disappointed. I am now at a very advanced age, and though I have no reason to believe that my mind has decayed as well as my corporeal strength, yet I cannot help agreeing with the opinion of David Hume, who says, "I consider that a man at sixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities;" and if it had been my fate to leave the world at that period of my life, I should not only have escaped infirmities, but disappointments, vexations, and sorrows.

To borrow the words of Dr. Johnson, in the last paper of his admirable Rambler, "that the same sentiments have not sometimes recurred, or the same expressions been too frequently repeated, I have not confidence in my abilities sufficient to warrant." And indeed, such must inevitably be the case; for I am not to coin words, and if I am describing tempers, qualities, talents, and persons of a similar nature, I must, of course, make use of similar epithets and forms of expression.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DR. ARNOLD. The name of Colman leads me to our old friend who was so long an ornament of the musical world, and, by the general estimation of his professional merits, was a man of great genius, as well as profound in musical science. In private life he was humorous, intelligent, and convivial. Our acquaintance began so early in my life, that I cannot recollect its origin. His numerous musical works sufficiently attest his genius and his knowledge. The first production, I believe, which brought his talents into notice was a song, which began "If 'tis joy to wound a lover." These words were adapted to so lively an air, that it was on every body's tongue, and was printed on ladies' fans and many other articles likely to extend its popularity.

Dr. Arnold was well acquainted with the world, and always took an active, spirited, and agreeable part in conversation. I was once happy enough to be instrumental in removing a slight but temporary difference between him and his friend Colman. This transient pause in their friendship was occasioned by the introduction of Mr. Storace into the Haymarket Theatre as the composer of "The Iron Chest," Dr. Arnold having for many years been the settled composer for that house. The doctor consulted me on the subject, and condescended to adopt my advice, when cordiality was soon restored between the two friends.

Dr. Arnold introduced me to Sir John Oldmixon,

grandson of the famous Mr. Oldmixon, the bitter adversary of Pope, and victim of the relentless poet. Sir John and I became very intimate, and he introduced me to his mother at Cheshunt. Miss Oldmixon had married a Mr. Morella, a musician, who died and left one son, who was in due time an officer in the army. As the Oldmixons were an ancient family who gave their name to a town, young Morella obtained permission to change his to that of his grandfather, and was knighted (I believe) by the Duke of Portland, when viceroy in Ireland.

Sir John was a lively companion, and inherited his father's love of music, performing tolerably well on the violin. His mother was tall and stately, and had doubtless been a fine woman. Her manners were very courteous, but had something of the formality of Queen Anne's court.

Pope became the subject of conversation, and I was surprised to find her speak with so much liberality of a man who had been so bitter an enemy of her father. I stopped but one night with them at Cheshunt, and never saw her afterwards. I heard no tradition respecting either Pope or her father.

Sir John had figured among the *beau monde* at Bath, where his figure was introduced in a print called "The Long Dance;" and also at Brighton, where he was first noticed by his late majesty when Prince of Wales, and distinguished among some amateur actors of the higher orders. He afterwards married Miss George, an actress and singer of the Haymarket Theatre. They subsequently went to America, where she displayed her theatrical talents; and he who had been so great a beau in this coun-

try, turned market-gardener in America, and used to drive his own cart, with vegetables, to the market, dropping his knighthood. I understood that, in consequence of his wife's conduct, he obtained a divorce. He returned to this country, and eagerly renewed his intercourse with me; but after two or three meetings at a tavern, and one in the street, I saw him no more, and never heard what had become of him.

To return to my friend Dr. Arnold: I lost in him an agreeable old friend, who, however, had introduced his son to me when just passed his "boyish days," and whose talents are too well known to require more from me than to say that I consider him as a legacy of friendship, which I shall always value on his own account, as well as for the respect which I bear to the memory of his father.

WILLIAM GIFFORD, ESQ. Considering my long friendship with this gentleman, which subsisted for upwards of forty years, it would be strange, indeed, if I did not give him a place in the account of my recollections. He has given so interesting and affecting a history of his life, that nothing can be added to that narrative of his early difficulties, and the manner in which they were surmounted.

I was first introduced to him by the Rev. William Peters, R.A. and chaplain to the Royal Academy. Unfortunately a difference arose between these old friends, which was followed by mutual and unappeasable hostility. Mr. Peters, as I have before stated, accused Gifford of having supplanted him in the favour of the late Lord Grosvenor, and as Gifford soon after formed an intimacy with Mr. Hoppner the artist, the cause of enmity was increased

by rivalry in the arts. It may be said of Gifford, as of the Earl of Dorset, that he was

The best good man with the worst-natured muse ;
and also, as Pope says of himself, that his life was
“ a long disease,” for he had a feeble frame, and it
was not well formed.

He was induced to write the affecting narrative of his life in consequence of some poetical attacks upon him by Dr. Wolcot, owing to a mistake, as I have stated in another place. He was a very powerful writer, and I have seen some remarks of his, which indeed passed through my hands when I was connected with “ The Sun ” newspaper, in which they were inserted, and which were characterized by what may be styled tremendous energy. These remarks were sent to me while he was at Ramsgate, and related to a political pamphlet written by Mr. Roscoe. Mr. Gifford had no mercy on those who differed with him in political opinions. He was a staunch supporter of Mr. Pitt’s administration, and was a firm and intimate friend of Mr. Canning.

I have often thought that, though he might not have equalled Junius in keen sarcasm, he would have been more than a match for him in force of language and cogency of reasoning. He was too apt in his critical comments, like Warburton, to treat others with virulence and contempt, but was a profound judge of literary merit. As he entertained, as all must, a high veneration for the genius of Shakspeare, it is surprising that he did not give an edition of that wonderful bard’s works, rather than those of Ben Jonson ; but Jonson was a scholar, and Gifford was strongly prejudiced in his favour on that account. How well he has executed his task

as editor of Jonson's Works, need not be told. Yet of late years he assured me that he had a great desire of publishing a new edition of Shakspeare, for which he said there was full room, after all the labour and research of the various commentators. But he said that his advanced time of life and ill health forbade the hope that he should ever be able to accomplish his purpose.

Gifford was a kind master, and of a forgiving nature. He had settled a pension on his housekeeper of a guinea a week for her life, in confidence of her fidelity ; but he found that, during a long illness which disabled him from all attention to domestic concerns, instead of paying his tradesmen, &c. for which he had furnished her with the means, she had devoted the money to her own use, had run him in debt to the amount of about 500*l.* and had besides exhausted his wine cellar, which had been amply stored. Notwithstanding her gross ingratitude and delinquency, he merely dismissed her.

The ability with which Gifford conducted "The Quarterly Review" need not be mentioned, as he rendered it the best work of that nature in Europe, and it still maintains its pre-eminence by the reputation which he conferred on it, and by the abilities of those who have succeeded him in the management. His health evidently declined in his latter years, in-somuch that though he always admitted me to see him, and has often written to me, requesting I would call, he was unable to speak more than a few words, desiring that I would talk, and not expect him to answer. In about half an hour after I had been with him, he would generally request that I would go and take tea below, where there were books to

amuse me, and then would send down a note to me sometimes, to mention anything that had occurred to him after I left him.

I have a great many of his letters, which are marked with such kindness and friendship that I am rather surprised I had no memorial in his will, as it is said he left property to the amount of about 27,000*l*. But he disposed of it in a manner honourable to his character; for, after a few legacies, he left the bulk of it to the son of his early protector, who had rescued him from hopeless indigence and obscurity, fostered his talents, provided for his education, and enabled him to make a distinguished figure in the literary world.

Gifford had been severe upon the late Mr. Kemble's "foggy throat," in his poem of "The Baviad." I introduced Mr. Kemble to him; and soon after in a new edition of that poem he effaced the passage. Mr. Kemble gave him the free use of his dramatic library, while he was preparing his edition of "Ben Jonson;" and Gifford was profuse in his acknowledgments of Kemble's kindness, and in respect for his talents.

Though Gifford had several appointments under government, and, doubtless, a settlement had been made on him by the late Lord Grosvenor, for being tutor to his son the present earl, yet it is difficult to account for his having left so much property, as for some years his infirmities obliged him to keep a carriage. No doubt he was a severe economist, and very temperate in his habits.

During my long connexion with him, I only dined with him once at his own house, with his friend the late Mr. Porden the architect, a man of great lite-

rary as well as professional talents, and who had been the intimate friend of Mason the poet. Mr. Porden declared to me his full conviction, that Mason was the author of the celebrated "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," a work of great poetical merit and humour, but so different from the usual style of Mason, as to render it difficult to conceive that it was the progeny of the same mind. Mr. Porden's youngest daughter, a lady of high poetical genius and knowledge, was married to Captain Franklin, the celebrated navigator, who lost in her death an amiable, intelligent, and accomplished companion. I now take leave of my old friend William Gifford.

CHAPTER XXX.

DOCTOR BENNET. With this gentleman, who was Bishop of Cloyne, I had the pleasure of being a little acquainted. He was esteemed a good scholar, and was certainly an amiable and unaffected ecclesiastic. I asked him if there existed any traditional account of his great predecessor, Bishop Berkeley. He assured me, that soon after taking possession of his diocese, he had made the same enquiry, but all he could learn was, that Dr. Berkeley had left a high reputation for mildness and piety, and that in his clothing, and all other domestic articles, he used nothing but the produce of the neighbourhood in which he resided. Doctor Bennet told me, also, that he was at Cambridge University

at the same time with Gray, and that as far as he knew that great poet, he was by no means the affected and fastidious character which he has been represented. He said, Gray was a reserved man, and not likely to encourage any light and frivolous conversation, and therefore that the character imputed to him was probably the result of vexation in those who had not been suffered to intrude upon his studious seclusion. As Doctor Bennet was an observing and discerning man, I have no hesitation in relying upon his character of the poet.

I may here relate a circumstance which the late Mr. Penneck assured me was a fact. Two gentlemen, strangers to each other, were passengers by themselves in the Windsor stage. One of them was the friend of Mr. Penneck. As they were passing Kensington church, the latter broke forth into an eulogium on "Gray's Elegy," declaring he never passed a churchyard without being affected by a sort of poetical enthusiasm; and he then recited several of the stanzas, and renewed the subject as every churchyard appeared in view. He afterwards, addressing himself to his fellow traveller, remarked how extraordinary it was that a poet who could write with such fervid genius and manly vigour, should be a delicate, timid, effeminate character, indeed "A puny insect shivering at a breeze." Soon after the conversation became general, and the other gentleman, who had been silently attentive, gave his opinions on such topics as arose, and displayed so much taste, judgment, and learning, as surprized and delighted the other. They both left the coach at Eton, and Mr. Penneck's friend was all anxiety to know who was the accomplished cha-

racter with whom he had parted. Meeting a friend, he was expressing his admiration, and just then the other gentleman appeared in view, and he was told that it was Gray the poet. He was then all confusion at the character which he had given of the bard to himself.

GEORGE COLMAN the Younger. It is no slight gratification to me that I am able to number this gentleman among my living friends. I have had the pleasure of an uninterrupted intercourse with him for upwards of thirty years. I hardly think that I should show an excess of partiality if I were to consider him as one of the very first dramatic writers of modern times, nor would it appear to me to be rash were I to rank him even with my old friend Sheridan. The characters which the latter has introduced, are, in a great degree, traditional; some of them may be found in Ben Jonson, in Beaumont and Fletcher, in Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh; but the characters which the junior Colman has represented, are drawn from real life, and diversified with great fertility and admirable humour. His "Heir at Law," "Poor Gentleman," and "John Bull," are excellent comedies. The characters are various, well contrasted, and uniformly discriminated and supported. His "Battle of Hexham,"* and his "Surrender of Calais," are written in

* The "Battle of Hexham" reminds me of a *jeu-d'esprit* of my friend Colman, that well merits a place in his lively "Random Records." Our late friend Dr. Moseley, who succeeded Dr. Monsey as physician of Chelsea Hospital, was making some comments on the play, which the author did not approve, and therefore wittily interrupted him in the following manner: "Recollect, doctor, that this is 'The Battle of Hexham,' not a bottle of Huxham."

the style and spirit of our ancient dramatic writers, whose works contain a sterling weight of matter of much higher value than what is fashioned for the present day. "The Mountaineers," besides an interesting fable, has a variety of characters, and abounds with passages of great poetical energy: and the same may be said of "The Iron Chest," founded on the interesting and impressive novel of my old friend Godwin.

Here I cannot but pause with regret that the unfavourable reception of this play, on its first representation, should have separated two friends, the author and the late Mr. Kemble, from each other, and induce the former to write his hostile preface. I was present at the first representation of this play, and really think that Kemble exerted himself to the utmost of his power to support it. The fact is, that Kemble was ill at the time, yet that very circumstance gave an increased interest to the character, for Sir Edward is supposed to be sunk into sickness and wasting in languor, and happily suited with the dejection and alarm in which the hero of the piece is supposed to be involved.

Not knowing that Kemble was really indisposed, I attributed his acting to his perfect conception of the nature and situation of the character, and thought his support of it was throughout admirable, and that I had never seen him to more advantage. The play, at first, was certainly too long, and Dodd, though an excellent actor, had too long a part, and rendered it tedious by what my old friend, the late Lord Guildford, would style his *twaddling* manner. But the author revised, corrected, and improved his piece, which has now a

right to be stationary with the English stage, and affords good scope for theatrical adventurers. Happily the two friends were again reconciled. Kemble made allowance for the *genus irritabile vatum*, and the author properly withdrew and suppressed his vindictive philippic.

I need not mention the humorous poems, farces, &c. &c. which my friend Colman has written, nor his diverting "Random Records," as they must be in the hands of all persons who pretend to taste; but shall conclude with a whimsical compliment that he paid to me in one of his letters, which is now before me.

IMPROMPTU.

Nine Tailors (as the proverb goes)

Make but one man,—though many clothes;

But thou art not, we know, like those,

My Taylor!

No—thou canst make, on Candour's plan,

Two of thyself—(how few that can!)—

The critic and the gentleman,

My Taylor!

THOMAS HARRIS, ESQ. This gentleman, who was long the chief proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, I became acquainted with so long ago as on the first representation of the opera of "The Duenna." We met at the house of Joshua Mayor, Esq. Member for Abingdon, at Millbank. Mrs. Mayor was a very accomplished woman, and had the character of a great wit. She was the daughter of Mr. Dickenson, one of the most eminent brewers of his time. She was understood to be the grand-daughter of the famous Mr. Bond Hopkins, immortalized by Pope. It is said that she brought to Mr. Mayor a fortune

of about fifty thousand pounds ; but as they were a fashionable pair and lived in a fashionable style, they were much lower in their condition towards the decline of life. Mr. Mayor died first, and Mrs. Mayor retired into the country with a remnant of her fortune. But she was a woman of excellent understanding, and bore the reverse of her fortune with cheerful resignation. Their house at Millbank was the resort of wits, barristers, and politicians, as well as of musicians, and indeed of all who could impart fashion and gaiety to the mansion.

The well known Mr. George Rose, the friend of Mr. Pitt, was a frequent visiter ; and I have met there Mr. Brummel, private secretary to Lord North, when prime minister, and father of the Mr. Brummel, who has risen into the fastastic distinction of being styled “ Emperor of the Beaux.” As Mrs. Mayor had a high intellectual character, I may indulge myself in the insertion of a few lines in return for some complimentary trifle which I had addressed to her.

Bard, all other bards excelling,
Who so well hast sung of me,
Bard, in Hatton Garden dwelling,
Thus I send my thanks to thee.
Long thy talents I have known,
Witty, generous, and free ;
But thy judgment ne’er was shown,
Till thou sang’st in praise of me.

Mr. Potter, a Welsh judge, and Mr. John Churchill, brother of the poet, I have also met at Mr. Mayor’s. The latter’s powers in conversation were congenial with those of his brother in poetry. I have met him also at the table of Mr. Harris, and

always found him the life of the company. Mr. Harris seemed to be the chief and favourite visitor of the house, and his acute and sound understanding and general knowledge rendered him a desirable companion. His views were at once comprehensive and minute, and the same powerful talents which qualified him to govern the complicated concerns of a theatre royal so well, would have fitted him for an elevated situation in the political world. No man was better able to judge of the merits of a dramatic composition, or to comply with the public taste in all its variations.

In consequence of the services which I had been able to render him, I was favoured with his confidence and friendship. He once offered me the privilege of writing admissions to his theatre, which I refused, because I knew that, by accepting it, I should expose him to the ill will of others. His ill health obliged him to retire from the conduct of the theatre during his latter years, and, living in the country, I had no opportunity of seeing him long before his death. I shall therefore conclude with an extract from one of his letters, as it shows the benevolence of his disposition towards the veteran Dibdin, and will serve as a memorial of our friendship.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I wish with all my heart I could possibly do what you request for my old friend Dibdin—but it is utterly impracticable. Will a permission for his sending in tickets to the amount of fifty pounds, on Monday the 12th instant, be of service to him? I mean they should be free of all charge or expense whatever. If yes—pray tell Brandon to get them

printed for him, specifying the number in pit, box, or gallery. I am sorry that I can do no more for the assistance of a poor fellow who in former times has often assisted me. Thanks for your excellent prologue—but the trifle you solicit is much too confined for your services—you, who are as constantly ready at your post for our service, as if you had no concerns whatever of your own.

Ever cordially and faithfully yours,

T. HARRIS.

Bellmonte, July 4th, 1813.

CHAPTER XXXI.

JOSEPH PLANTA, ESQ. If moral principles and the force of good example may be considered as intellectual wealth, I had an opportunity of deriving such mental affluence by my intercourse with this gentleman; for though I had no domestic intimacy with him, I have had the pleasure of meeting him in company with the late Rev. Mr. Harpur, Mr. Maty, and Mr. Penneck, officers of the British Museum, at the time when Mr. Planta was under-librarian of that national institution, and afterwards principal on the death of Dr. Morton.

I became acquainted with Mr. Planta about the year 1787. I had been previously acquainted with the other three gentlemen; and Mr. Maty, conceiving that I had rendered him some literary service, though of a very trifling kind, brought me an elegant

snuff-box from Paris, which I treasure as a relic of old friendship.

I have already had occasion to mention Mr. Harpur in the course of these pages; and all I shall say of him at present is, that he was one of the best-bred men I ever knew, with all the decorum, but without any of the formality, usually attributed to the priesthood.

There was another officer of the Museum about that time, a Dr. Grey, who was very fond of music, and had a musical daughter. He was rather morose in his temper, and formed a perfect contrast to the easy and affable manners of Mr. Planta. All of these gentlemen are dead, but I have not forgotten the pleasure which I enjoyed in their company.

Mr. Planta was a native of Switzerland, and though he was an Englishman in loyal feeling, yet he did not forget his own country, but gratified his patriotic spirit by writing a history of it, which appears to be elegant and impartial. He was also the author of "An Essay on the Runic or Scandinavian Language," and published a catalogue of the manuscripts in the Cottonian Library. His last work, I believe, was "A short History of the Restoration of the Helvetic Republic,"—a proof that though he had long been a denizen of Great Britain, a strong sense of his *natale solum* still dwelt upon his heart, while every one of his numerous friends would have been proud to call him their countryman.

Mr. Planta was a fellow of the Royal Society, had the honour of conducting the foreign correspondence of that noble institution, and was afterwards appointed its secretary. I was once in hopes that I should be able to join the amicable circle at the

British Museum, as a vacancy occurred among its officers, and I was favoured with a letter of recommendation from the Duke of Marlborough to Dr. Moore, then Archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop favoured me with an interview, treated me with great courtesy, and asked me why I wished to bury my youth in that comparative seclusion. I told his lordship that quiet, study, and independence would be the chief enjoyment of my life, and that I should be perfectly contented with the situation which I solicited. The archbishop then asked me if I was sufficiently acquainted with natural history, as that was an essential requisite for the office. On my answering in the negative, he told me that the place was not a gift for him to bestow, but a duty for him to discharge, and then courteously put an end to the interview.

The Museum having lost by death so many of its former officers, and in later years the Rev. Thomas Maurice and Archdeacon Nares, both men of learning and literary powers, I seldom had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Planta, except accidentally in the street. Fully aware of his parental affection, I always made my first enquiry after his son; his countenance then invariably lightened, and his eyes glistened with pleasure, and hence I could not but infer that so affectionate a father was rewarded by a son likely to fulfil all his paternal wishes.

I was very many years ago acquainted with the Rev. Henry Stephens, who was married to a sister of Mr. Planta, and was promised an introduction to her, understanding that she was a very accomplished lady, but I lost sight of Mr. Stephens, and never enjoyed that pleasure.

Nothing can be recorded of Mr. Planta but what would be highly honourable to his memory, but there is one circumstance I must mention from respect to his character and to gratify myself. When Alexander, Emperor of Russia, visited the British Museum during his short stay in this country, he was accompanied through the rooms by Mr. Planta. The Emperor observed that the museum in Paris contained a much superior and more valuable collection. Mr. Planta modestly answered the Emperor in the following words: "Your Majesty should consider that we have nothing here but what has been honestly bought and paid for,"—an answer respectful, spirited, and just, and which shows how much he felt for the honour of his adopted country. This answer may well be classed with that of Prior the poet, who, when viewing the pictures at Versailles, where the victories of the French monarch are painted by Le Brun, and being asked by a French courtier whether the King of England's palace had such decorations, immediately answered: "The monuments of my master's actions are to be seen everywhere but in his own house:"—an answer loyal and witty, but inferior to that of Mr. Planta in point of moral dignity. Mr. Planta died in December 1827.

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE. It is impossible for me to omit noticing this great artist, whom I had known for nearly forty years, whom, with all the world, I admired for his professional excellence, and whom I sincerely valued as a friend. I knew his father, a very respectable and amiable old gentleman, and his two brothers. One was a clergyman, with whom I was but little acquainted; with the other I was in-

timate many years. He had tried his fortune on the stage, but not rising into eminence, he entered into the army, and was respected as an officer and esteemed for his private worth. They have both been dead many years.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, as long as I can remember him, was admired for the suavity of his manners, as well as for the precocity of his genius. It cannot be said that he advanced in both, for his improvement in his profession was rapid, but the suavity of his manners became systematic, and settled into refined and habitual courtesy. I have been assured by a friend who knew what he said to be founded in truth, that when Sir Thomas Lawrence was employed in Vienna by order of his late Majesty, his manners were so polished and refined, supported also as they were by his general knowledge, taste, and professional genius, that he was admitted into the highest circles at the imperial court, from which all lower grades of nobility were excluded.

Lawrence was a firm friend, and his qualities were well calculated to excite friendship. He lived in the utmost intimacy with the late Mr. George Dance, the architect; the late Mr. John Kemble, the greatest ornament of the stage in his time, except Mrs. Siddons; with the late Mr. Farington, the admired landscape-painter; and with Messrs. Smirke, senior and junior; all of whom were able to appreciate his merits, and the last two are living witnesses of his worth, and sincerely reverence his memory. I have had the pleasure of meeting all of them at his table, which was characterised by elegance and hospitality. He has often paid me the compliment of desiring me to look at his productions, and to give my opinion of

their merits or defects ; and I have sometimes been, by his encouragement, emboldened to offer an objection, which he always received with a kind toleration.

It would be presumption in me to express my admiration of his genius, as it is so well known and acknowledged by the world at large ; and, perhaps, that world has never witnessed a nobler manifestation of graphic excellence, the product of an individual, than that fine collection of his works which has been exhibited since his death at the British Gallery in Pall Mall. As he occasionally condescended to ask my opinion of his works, I often solicited his judgment on my humble verses, and can truly say that I always profited by his critical taste and acumen.

Hearing of his lamented death, I went on the Sunday following the day when that melancholy event took place, and was permitted to take the last view of my departed friend ; and I regret to say, he was altered so much that it would have been impossible for me to have known him if I had seen his remains in any other house. I shall now conclude this humble tribute to his memory with a copy of his answer to a letter which I sent to him some time ago, including a poem, if I dare call it so, which I wrote on seeing his portrait of a lady.

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks to you (and they ought to have been returned sooner) for your friendly note and flattering tribute to my fair subject and her painter. Her name was "Thayer" when I painted the picture, and is now "Madame Thiebault." I think the verses are of your very best, and particularly the last

stanza, and the last two lines, but I would cut out the third stanza, because it suggests a doubt adverse to the fidelity of the artist and the beauty of the subject. Let me but have your youth at your age, and I shall be additionally grateful to Providence for its bounties to me.

Believe me ever, my dear Sir,

Your very faithful servant,

THOMAS LAWRENCE.

Russell Square, Wednesday.

The world at large needs no proof of the genius of Sir Thomas Lawrence, or the extraordinary excellence of his productions, and ought also to know that the generosity of his disposition corresponded with his great professional excellence.

When I was advised by my friends, in consequence of the sudden loss of the property which I had been a great part of my life acquiring, to publish my Poems by subscription, I wrote to Sir Thomas Lawrence, requesting he would honour my list of subscribers with his name, but, as money was a great disorganizer of friendship, desiring that none might pass between us, but that if he would favour me with a print from his portrait of our mutual friend Mr. Kemble, I should esteem that a more valuable subscription. The following is a copy of his answer :

TO JOHN TAYLOR, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

I should be sorry if on this occasion "money did not pass between us." You shall pardon me therefore for disobeying that part of your wish,

though I shall gladly request your acceptance of the print you mention the moment I can recover a good impression. I beg the favour of you to send me two copies of your work, my ready subscription to which I am sure I requested might be inserted at Mr. Murray's, when the publication was first proposed.

Believe me to remain with constant esteem and respect, my dear sir, your very faithful servant,

THOMAS LAWRENCE.

Russell Square, April 10th, 1827.

It is proper here to mention, that the foregoing letter contained a draft on Coutts's banking-house for ten guineas, as his subscription, which was the more gratifying, as it contradicted the report that he was embarrassed in his circumstances, owing to his liberal expenditure on the works of great masters.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. JAMES HOOK. This gentleman was long in high reputation for his musical powers; he was the organist to Vauxhall Gardens for nearly half a century, and his practice as a teacher of music was extensive. His compositions are innumerable; his songs are marked by science and simplicity, and occasionally by humour, particularly those which he composed for Vauxhall Gardens.

Mr. Hook was a very skilful performer on the organ and pianoforte, and an able teacher in singing;

many distinguished vocal performers were indebted to him for those instructions which raised them to eminence. He was a very sensible and intelligent man, particularly fond of punning, and remarkably fertile in that species of amusement; he was cheerful and good-humoured.

Mrs. Hook, his first wife, possessed very respectable talents as an artist, particularly in miniature-painting, many proofs of which I have seen, and which, in my opinion, displayed great skill and taste. She had also literary talents, and wrote two or three dramatic pieces, which were well received by the public, and to which her husband's music was adapted; she wrote the words of several of his songs. I have enjoyed many pleasant hours at their hospitable board.

Mrs. Hook died some years before her husband, to the regret of numerous friends, and a considerable time elapsed before Mr. Hook married again. He resided at Calais for some years before he died, and I am among many friends who hold his memory in respect. I knew him during the childhood of his two sons, James and Theodore, both of whom displayed extraordinary abilities at a very early age. Their parents, of course, were proud of such promising offspring, and gave them every advantage of education to bring forth their talents.

James, the eldest, was placed very early in life at Westminster school, where he soon distinguished himself by his classical attainments and literary powers. I remember that, while he was at Westminster School, he paid me the compliment of submitting to my judgment a mock-heroick poem of his own writing, which appeared to me at the time

to be a work of humour as well as of poetical spirit. He also at a very early period displayed considerable skill and taste as an artist. I have seen a sketch-book, containing some vivid portraits of many distinguished characters of the time. This book was, I believe, in the hands of his late Majesty, by whom Mr. James Hook was much patronised when Prince of Wales, and since his elevation to the throne. Soon after he wrote an opera, entitled "Jack of Newbury," to which his father contributed the music, and which was successfully represented at Drury Lane Theatre.

During the period of the French Revolution, and while its detestable principles were vehemently advocated in this country, he wrote a series of letters, that were inserted in "The Sun" evening paper, of which I was then a proprietor. They were characterized by sound learning, cogent argument, literary force, and fervid loyalty. As several demagogues, and some opposition newspapers, mentioned with high praise the liberties enjoyed by our ancestors, he published a series of political papers, under the title of "Good Old Times," in which he demonstrated the superior condition of the people of the present age, and with keen research and historical accuracy, as well as with powerful reasoning, illustrated the tyranny which the people suffered at the very periods that were held forth as proofs of popular freedom by the revolutionary writers and champions of anarchy.

These papers were also taken into "The Sun" newspaper, as they successively appeared, and were afterwards collected into a volume of historical truth, sound reasoning, and political sagacity. After his

admission into the church, Mr. James Hook successively enjoyed several valuable preferments, and finally became Dean of Worcester, with a probable prospect of attaining a mitre. His powers were various, and he inherited the musical taste of his father. He married a daughter of Sir Walter Farquhar, by whom he had a family ; and died a short time ago, when he might be said not to have passed the prime of life.

Theodore, his younger brother by several years, also distinguished his talents at Westminster School, and those talents expanded with his progress in life. He is the author of several dramatic pieces, which have been represented with great success. I never heard that he was trained for any profession, but by the connexions which his abilities enabled him to acquire, he obtained a lucrative appointment at the Isle of France. Placing too much confidence in a deputy, who abused his trust, he was involved in great pecuniary difficulties on account of the demands of Government. As however, he was the victim of treachery, he experienced the lenity of Government, for which it is understood that he made an ample return, in being the chief writer in a weekly paper, published on Sundays, which suddenly arose into great popularity by its wit, humour, spirit, and loyalty.

Mr. Theodore Hook is eminent for his colloquial powers, which render him an acceptable and a court-ed guest in some of the higher circles of the metropolis. I might perhaps say more of this gentleman, if my opinion of his merits, as he is alive, were not likely to be ascribed to partiality and the natural impulse of old friendship with his family.

As a proof of the favour in which the late Dean of

Worcester was held by his present Majesty, he received a valuable snuff-box from the royal hand, enriched by a beautiful portrait, in enamel, of Colbert, the celebrated French Minister of a former age.

W. T. FITZ-GERALD, Esq. This gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted many years, was a member of a club entitled "Keep the Line," the import of which was to maintain due decorum and respect in society. Never was there a stronger opposition than the implied precept in the designation of the club, and the liberties which the members took with each other in the way of raillery; though, as all passed with good humour and conviviality, no offence was ever taken during the time I was a member; but as the meetings were held on Sundays, for the accommodation of Mr. Lewis, Mr. Holman, and other theatrical gentlemen, and cards were introduced, the club gradually declined, and I sent in my resignation, retaining, however, a sincere friendship with its members in general. The club soon after broke up.

At this club I first became acquainted with Mr. Fitz-Gerald, and our intercourse ripened into a sincere and warm friendship, which only terminated with his lamented death.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald was related to the family of the Duke of Leinster. He was nephew to the Mr. Martin, who wounded Wilkes in a duel, and was afterwards the hero of one of Churchill's poems, entitled "The Duellist," not without danger to the poet, for Mr. Martin was a very determined character, and as likely to call out Churchill as Wilkes.

Soon after I became acquainted with Mr. Fitz-Gerald he introduced me to his family, consisting of

his sister and the two Misses Martin, his cousins. It was understood that there was a good income among them, which they formed into a common stock, and lived together, by which means they were able to keep a good house in Upper Seymour Street, and to receive their friends with liberal hospitality.

As Mr. Fitz-Gerald was a great lover of the drama, he had frequently dramatic scenes represented at his house in the evening to parties of his friends, some of whom used to take part in the scenic amusements. The late Lady De Crespigny used to attend these parties, and assist in the representations. I remember to have been present when they represented a scene in "The Fair Penitent," in which Mr. Fitz-Gerald supported the part of Horatio, and Lady De Crespigny that of Calista. There was a sententious dignity in Fitz-Gerald's Horatio; and the lady gave great effect to her part, particularly where Calista snatches her letter from Horatio, and destroys "the wicked lying evidence of shame."

Another of these amateur performers was my friend William Boscawen, Esq. a poet and a scholar, and whose translation of Horace is justly admired for correctness and spirit. He presented the work to me, and when I expressed my regret that he had given "The Art of Poetry" in verses of eight syllables, he agreed with me that it ought to have been translated in the heroic measure; and the last time I saw him, which was accidentally in the Strand, he told me that he had made a great progress in a new translation of that poem, in ten syllable verse, as more suited to a didactic subject. He looked, however, so ill, that I could not help foreboding in my mind that he would not live to finish his version. It

happened to be the day on which the directors and subscribers to "The Literary Fund" held their anniversary dinner ; and when I met him, he was so zealous in the cause of that noble institution, that I am sure severe illness only would have kept him from the celebration. His amiable lady was also one of the voluntary actresses at Mr. Fitz-Gerald's, and supported pathetic characters with great feeling and delicacy.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald, besides his patrimonial inheritance, had a retired pension as one of the officers of the Victualling Office. Before he left the office he was the next claimant, by seniority, to the head of the department in which he was engaged ; but he waved his right in favour of an inferior, upon a promise of a hundred a-year. The other succeeded ; but, proving a defaulter to a large amount, he absconded to America, and was followed by officers sent by our Government, and frightened into restitution, though, if he had firmly held his ill-attained property, it is said that he would have been supported by the American legislature.

Having mentioned that admirable institution, "The Literary Fund," it is proper that I should speak of its founder, the REV. DAVID WILLIAMS. I was well acquainted with him before that institution was established. He was a learned man, and a powerful writer. His first public appearance in London was as a preacher, at an obscure chapel in Soho, where he brought forward a new form of prayer, and advanced doctrines different from those of the orthodox church, but did not become popular, chiefly, perhaps, because he did not imitate the zeal and

enthusiasm of the Whitefields and the Wesleys. He therefore relinquished that pursuit, and devoted himself to literature.

He had early in life written a work entitled "The Philosopher," in which there appeared to be shrewd and profound reasoning. He engaged in a translation of the works of Voltaire, and on the appearance of the French Revolution, became partial to its principles. Soon after the commencement of that disturbance in the civilized world, he published a work entitled "Lessons to a Young Prince;" but immediately after it appeared, the infamous Thomas Paine came forth with his more daring "Rights of Man," and the "Lessons" had comparatively few pupils.

One of his early publications was a "Letter to David Garrick," in which he treated the British Roscius with great severity. His hostility was imputed to two causes; one the rejection by the manager of a dramatic piece on a Welsh subject, and the other his friendship for Mossop the actor, whom he accused Garrick of having excluded from his stage from motives of jealousy, because his own powers had declined, and he had then "a lacklustre eye." This pamphlet had a great sale, but was condemned for its illiberal spleen.

It is probable that from his connexion with the booksellers, he published many works during his latter years, but, as I was not in the habit of visiting him, I had no opportunity of knowing what they were. As it is not known that he had suffered the severe vicissitudes of a literary life himself, he is the more entitled to the praise of benevolence for having

been the founder of "The Literary Fund," which may be considered as one of the most meritorious institutions in this country, and in all Europe.

The delicacy, as well as humanity, with which it is conducted, not only in affording relief to the unfortunate votaries of the muses, but in sparing their feelings by the laudable caution with which pecuniary assistance is administered, is above all praise. Nor is this delicate reserve the only merit of the directors; for they do not wait for applications, but endeavour to discover the victims of misfortune, and wherever they find suitable objects, promptly tender a liberal aid. The followers of literature and the friends of genius must therefore hold in lasting veneration the name of David Williams.

He was a tall, stout, healthy man during the time that I knew him; but I understand that within the last two years of his life he was so much reduced by sickness, as to be wholly unable to leave his home, and disposed to admit only the visits of his most intimate friends. He was talkative in company, but if opposed in argument, there was a kind of negligent indifference, and assumed superiority in his manner, as if he thought his opponent's objections not entitled to serious confutation. Judging from what he said to me when I last met him, he seemed to have become a latitudinarian in religious matters; for observing him in a very light grey coat, I could not help expressing my surprise, "Why," said he, "I wore the garb of hypocrisy so long that I was ashamed of it, and have now cast it aside." He was however a warm and steady friend, and indefatigable in the cause of humanity.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald was a strenuous and persevering

supporter of "The Literary Fund," to which he annually contributed a laudatory ode, to the number of eighteen, which he recited himself on the anniversary celebrations as long as his health would permit, and the vigorous animation of his manner gave powerful support to the poetical energy of his several compositions.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald fell under the sportive lash of the authors of "The Rejected Addresses," chiefly on account of the fervid loyalty which marked his poetry in general, but that poetry is really characterized by so much strength, correctness, and feeling, that it will stand its ground; and I am persuaded that if my ingenious and liberal-minded friends, the authors of those sportive effusions, had known him, the manly character and honourable spirit of Mr. Fitz-Gerald would have exempted him from their humorous hostility. As to the other critical assailants of Mr. Fitz-Gerald, except Lord Byron, they are unworthy of notice.

Before I take leave of Mr. Fitz-Gerald, I will shortly return to Mr. Boscawen. He was the nephew of Admiral Boscawen, one of our former naval heroes; but though the glorious victory of the Nile seems to lessen the triumph of all preceding naval achievements, Mr. Boscawen came forward with an ode in honour of Nelson, expressive of enthusiastic admiration. Mr. Boscawen published a volume of "Original Poems," highly creditable to his genius and taste. He also published a separate poem entitled "The Progress of Satire," occasioned by a passage which alluded to him in "The Pursuits of Literature." It is somewhat curious that

the author of this popular poem has never been discovered.

For my part, I consider "The Pursuits of Literature" as one of the very best of modern poems. It is founded upon the true principles of poetry, politics, and morals, though the late commentator Steevens invidiously said, that "the lines were only pegs to hang the notes upon." To prove the folly of the observation, a small edition of the poem was published without notes, and was powerfully impressive. What modern poet has produced a passage equal to that of "The Bard," in "The Pursuits of Literature?"

Mr. Mathias presented to me his tract on the subject of the "Rowley Poems," and his arguments on the question of their authenticity appear to me to be decisive. Mr. Mathias is admitted to be a profound scholar, and I have been assured that he writes the Italian language with as much precision and taste as if he were a native of that part of Italy where it is spoken with the greatest purity and elegance. He has long resided at Naples, but wherever he resides he must be considered as the perfect gentleman.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald was for many years upon the most intimate footing with the late amiable Lord Dudley and Ward, a nobleman of the good old school. He was distinguished for the benevolence of his disposition and the urbanity of his manners. His political principles being congenial with those of Mr. Fitz-Gerald, the noble lord was highly gratified with that gentleman's poetical recitations. His lordship, I understand, died intestate, from a conviction that his hereditary successor would dispose of his property ac-

according to the parental intentions; but the present Lord Dudley has probably exceeded those intentions.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald had long been afflicted with an asthma, and latterly with a dropsy, which finally destroyed his constitution. He has left an affectionate widow and six children to lament the loss of a kind husband and father, a loyal subject, a polished gentleman, and an excellent member of society.

CHAPTER XXXII.

JOHN CROWDER, ESQ. This gentleman, who conducted himself so well during his mayoralty, I had the pleasure of knowing many years, and have passed many pleasant hours at his hospitable mansion, near the three-mile stone on the Hammersmith Road. He frequently invited his friends to his plenteous and elegant table. His guests were chiefly literary characters, or friends connected with literature. I have met there the late Sir Nathaniel Conant, formerly a bookseller; the Baldwins, eminent booksellers and printers; Mr. Alexander Chalmers; Mr. George Nicol, and his son, Mr. William Nicol. Good humour and festivity was "the order of the day."

Mr. Crowder was a printer, and a proprietor of "The Public Ledger," a daily paper, that under his conduct faithfully adhered to its original motto, viz. "Open to all parties, but influenced by none." He was a firm friend to the British constitution, equally

free from all servile devotion to the ministry, and adverse to all the violence of party. He was also, I believe, connected with a paper manufactory; and possessed, by all accounts, property amply sufficient to justify his liberal hospitality.

In the earlier part of his life, he was attached to the stage, and was occasionally an amateur actor of such merit, as might have tempted him to adopt the theatrical profession, if he had not had better prospects. Dr. Stratford, a clergyman, had written a tragedy entitled "Lord Russell," and I was present at the performance of this tragedy in Drury Lane Theatre by amateur actors, and Mr. Crowder was one of them. Mr. Lawrence, the father of the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, was another. A son of Dr. Lucas, a celebrated Irish patriot and writer, was also a supporter of this piece for the benefit of the author; and all I remember is, that there was something so grotesque and ludicrous in the performance of Mr. Lucas, that it was in the daily papers the subject of ridicule for many days after.

I do not recollect that any former Lord Mayor, within my time, so rapidly passed through the several offices of sheriff, alderman, and chief magistrate of the city, as Mr. Crowder,—a proof of the excellence of his character, and the general estimation in which it was held.

I had not seen him since he invited me to his sheriff's dinner, till I lately met him at my old and worthy friend's, Sir William Beechey, with whom I was sitting in his painting-room; Mr. Crowder, then Lord Mayor, when he entered the room and saw me, seemed to recollect old times, and gave a start of theatrical surprise, and before we parted, he invited

Sir William, myself, and my son, to one of his private dinners at the Mansion-house. Illness prevented my attending the first invitation, but we soon received another, which my son and I accepted ; but then, unfortunately, his illness prevented his presiding at the table, and that illness, to the regret of his numerous friends, has since terminated in his death.

It is some consolation to those friends, that Sir William Beechey has painted a fine portrait of him in his civic robes, and as it will doubtless come into the hands of the engraver, they will all have an opportunity of obtaining a faithful and spirited likeness of an estimable man and an able and upright magistrate.

DR. WILLIAM THOMPSON. This gentleman was a native of Scotland, and a very learned man ; he is mentioned by my friend Mr. Moore, in his *Life of Sheridan*. He was very intelligent, but very absent ; I was intimate with him for nearly thirty years. He was the particular friend of Gilbert Stewart, the Scotch historian, with whom also I had the pleasure of being acquainted.

I met Dr. Thompson one day in Soho ; and as he was communicative and instructive, I always listened to him with pleasure. He began to speak on the politics of the day, and of the universal dissipation of the age, concluding every remark, "But, Sir, it all arises from the progress of manners." The discourse lasted so long, that I had no time to spare, therefore taking advantage of a momentary pause, I asked him how Mrs. Thompson (his first wife) was. "Oh, Sir !" said he, "I am one of the most unfortunate men in the world ; she died last night, and I am now going to the undertaker to arrange her

funeral." Having a great respect for the Doctor, I could not avoid feeling some satisfaction, that his political dissertation on the progress of manners had for some time released him from the pressure of conjugal anxiety.

WILLIAM PEARCE, ESQ. It is with pleasure that I can include this gentleman among my living friends, as well as my old ones. He long held a responsible situation at the Admiralty, and has for some years retired to the enjoyment of ease, literature, and domestic happiness. He married the sister of my old friend Sir Henry Bate Dudley.

Mr. Pearce is well known in the dramatic world. His farces were always successful, particularly his "Hartford Bridge," which was skilfully adapted to the talents of the respective performers, and was so attractive at the time when it first appeared, that it well might be revived and ranked among the stock pieces. Mr. Pearce's first production was a poetical description of the reigning beauties of the time. The characters were nicely discriminated, and the praise was appropriate without flattery. This work was called "The Bevy of Beauties," and was so much admired that it procured for the author the title of "Bevy Pearce." Many of those beauties have doubtless obeyed the summons of "the fell serjeant Death;" but the work should be revived, that as Vandyke has bequeathed to us the "Beauties of the reign of Charles the Second" by his admirable pencil, those of the reign of George the Third may be transmitted to posterity by the poetical delineations of my friend Pearce.

Mr. Pearce has written many popular songs, which have been adapted to music by his excellent

friend Shield, a man whom all who knew him admired and loved. I will mention one of these popular songs, because, though written by Mr. Pearce, and the music by Shield, it has been erroneously attributed to the elder Dibdin, with whose lyric compositions it indeed may well be compared. This song was styled "Tom Moody."

You all knew Tom Moody, the whipper-in, well.

This song is properly assigned to Mr. Pearce, in Daniel's valuable edition of "British Sports," and in other publications, so that there can be no excuse for depriving the author and the composer of their due praise.

DOCTOR HILL, chiefly distinguished by his "Swedish knighthood," which he translated into English, and generally styled Sir John Hill, was well acquainted with my father, but I never saw him, though I was very desirous of being introduced to him, as his works had highly gratified me in early life. He was a man of very extraordinary powers, and might have risen into the most respectable estimation, if he had not been the victim of vanity and malevolence. Though a very timid man, and disposed to submit to the grossest personal violence, and even chastisement, nothing could subdue the heroic intrepidity of his pen. His history is so well known, that it would be absurd to detail it in this place.

He was severely handled by Churchill, but his indiscriminate censure of others justly exposed him to assaults. He attacked Christopher Smart, the poet, who was provoked to write a mock heroic poem on him, entitled "The Hilliad," to which Mr.

Arthur Murphy assured me, that he wrote the copious notes annexed. Smart styled Hill in this poem,

The insolvent tenant of incumber'd space.

Smart only published one book of this poem, and promised another, but his mind became disordered, which rendered him incapable.

It is a singular circumstance, that though so pusillanimous in his own temper, Hill has drawn a portrait of such firm, temperate, and determined courage in his novel, called "The Adventures of Mr. Lovell," as it might be conceived hardly possible to enter into the mind of so opposite a character. He quarrelled with Woodward, the actor, and wrote severely against him. Woodward was provoked to reply in a pamphlet in which there was a passage to the following effect, as well as I remember. "I once," says Woodward, "saw you play Lothario at May-Fair, when Dagger Marr (a poor actor) was Altamont, and the audience heartily concurred with you, when you dying said, 'Oh ! Altamont, thy genius is the stronger.'"

The late Mr. Jerningham told me that Hill appeared to him to be a good Latin and Greek scholar, but that he was totally unacquainted with the modern languages of Europe ; yet he invited all the *corps diplomatique* to dine with him at Bayswater, and requested Mr. Jerningham to be of the party, that he might be instrumental in promoting some intercourse between the host and his guests, which without such aid must have been very limited.

One time, when King George the Third was at the theatre, and an incidental compliment was paid

from the stage on his Majesty's patronage of literature, Sir John Hill, who was in a neighbouring box, arose in a manner that attracted the attention of the audience, and made a formal bow to his Majesty, merely to render himself conspicuous.

Dennis M'Kerchier, Esq. an Irish gentleman of fortune, who lived with Lady Vane, was said to have written her memoirs, as they appear in "Peregrine Pickle;" and Dr. Hill was employed by Lord Vane to write the history of "Lady Frail," to counteract the impression on the public. The infidelity of the lady had induced M'Kerchier to separate from her. When he was near death, she anxiously desired to see him, but he would not suffer her to approach. Mr. M'Kerchier is introduced in "Peregrine Pickle" as the gentleman who so generously protected the young man in the famous Anglesey cause, who was so cruelly persecuted by Lord Valentia, his uncle. This story is the foundation of Mr. Godwin's last romance, entitled "Cloudesley."

Dr. Hill, in his novel of Mr. Lovell, according to report, intended to draw his own character as the hero of the piece, and he there mentions an amour that Lovell had with the famous Mrs. Woffington.

Mrs. Woffington was so regardless of her reputation that little respect is due to her memory; but it is impossible to excuse the vain relation of Dr. Hill, even admitting that it was well founded.

Dr. Hill possessed poetical talents that might have raised him into notice. There are some specimens in the novel alluded to, but I subjoin the following stanzas, which are little known, and still less to have been written by him.

ANACREONTIC.

Bid me, when forty winters more
 Have furrow'd deep my pallid brow ;
 When from my head, a scanty store,
 Lankly the wither'd tresses flow ;
 When the warm tide that, bold and strong,
 Now routs impetuous on and free,
 Languid and slow, scarce steals along,—
 Then bid me court sobriety.

Nature, who form'd the varied scene
 Of storm and calm, of frost and fire,
 Unerring guide, could only mean
 That Age should reason, Youth desire ;
 Shall then that rebel Man presume,
 Inverting Nature's laws, to seize
 The dues of Age in Youth's high bloom,
 And join impossibilities ?

Let me waste the frolic May
 In wanton joy and wild excess,
 In revel, sport, and laughter gay,
 In mirth and rosy cheerfulness.
 Woman, the soul of all delights,
 And wine, the spur of love, be there,
 All charms me that to joy incites,
 And every she that's kind is fair.

There is a redundancy of imagery in the first part of the last stanza, but the whole is spirited and pointed.

The doctor was a pitiable victim to the gout. Having once met my friend Penneck, who was hobbling under the same disorder, the doctor said, "Try the tincture of Barduna, it is a certain cure." A fortnight after, coming in his carriage to the British Museum, and hardly able to get out of it, being so severely attacked by the gout, and meeting Mr. Penneck at the same place, the latter with sarcastic

gravity said, "Doctor, let me recommend the tincture of Barduna to you as a sure specific."

It is impossible to reflect on the character of Sir John Hill, to whom Nature had been so bountiful, without feeling regret that his talents, attainments, enterprising spirit, and indefatigable industry, should have been nullified by his envy, vanity, and morbid thirst for fame, or rather for notoriety. Properly directed, his literary powers and his fertility might have raised him to one of the highest ranks of literary eminence. But as it was, he rendered himself

————— A fix'd figure

For the hand of scorn to point her slow and moving finger at.

I once met his widow at the house of Mr. Pope, the actor, in Half-moon Street, and Dr. Wolcot was of the party, to whom she was formally introduced as to Peter Pindar. She seemed to be an intelligent and lady-like character. She paid Dr. Wolcot many compliments on his works, and recited many passages from them. The doctor, who was fond of praise, seemed to be highly gratified with her commendation, and amply returned her courteous attention. The doctor and I went away together, and as we walked, I asked him how he liked Lady Hill. He said she was a very agreeable, elegant, and intelligent woman. I then asked him if he knew who she was. He said, "I suppose the widow of some Irish lord." "No," said I, "she is the widow of that celebrated physician, Sir John Hill." "What! of that old quack—have I been praising her? D—n me, I will go back and spit at her." This menace he uttered in a momentary anger; for soon after, reflecting on her praises of his works,

he returned to his first feelings, and added, "But she is, however, really a very agreeable woman." Such was the impression of Dr. Hill's memory on a man who otherwise would have honoured his talents and admired his productions.

I shall now conclude these "Rambling Recollections" with simply observing, that if they shall amuse the reader as much as they have done the writer, he will be abundantly satisfied for the labour which it has cost him to put them together.

THE END.

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